



Price of a barrel of petroleum
US\$ 70.52
↑ 0.36

INSIDE TODAY

U.S. NEWS

DEATH PANEL



In this Aug. 29, 2008 file photo, shows Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin. Palin abruptly announced Friday, July 3, 2009. Former Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin called President Barack Obama's health plan "downright evil" Friday Aug. 7, 2009 in her first online comments since leaving office, saying in a Facebook posting that he would create a "death panel" that would deny care to the neediest Americans.

See International News on Page B4

SPORTS NEWS

TIGER'S ON TOP



Tiger Woods hits off the fifth fairway during the first round of the 91st PGA Championship at the Hazeltine National Golf Club in Chaska, Minn., Thursday, Aug. 13, 2009.

See Sports Today on Page B10

Aruba Today & Bon Dia Aruba review Kingdom Games 2009



ORANJESTAD - Seeing that now the Kingdom games 2009 are behind us, we did not want to miss the opportunity to show you some images that we took of different events that we visited.

See Pages 8 & 9

CBS Radio Host Dan Taylor Visits Erin Croes In Brand New Magic Fm Studios Magic Fm New South Beach Location Applauded By Nyc Radio Pro



PALM BEACH – On Tuesday August 11 Dan Taylor, radio host of the Dan Taylor Morning Show at W-CBS 101.1 FM from New York City, paid a visit to the brand new radio studios of Magic 96.5 FM in the South Beach mall.

Local radio legend and station owner Erin Croes welcomed Dan Taylor and hosted him for a tour at the brand new studios in the heart of Palm Beach.

Dan Taylor was impressed with the studios and overall look of the new Magic FM location. "The view from the studio, overlooking the hotels and the palm trees here at Palm Beach really blows me away. And I love the fact that this radio station created a bar in their Lobby", Taylor commented on the new Magic FM facilities. While touring the studios Taylor recorded a new promotional jingle for Magic 96.5 leaving his mark on Aruba for local listeners. Taylor was on island for a 3-day live broadcast from the Aruba Marriott Resort, promoting Aruba as a perfect vacation destination.

Continued on Next Page



CHOCOLATE, CARAMEL AND COOKIE
THE TWIX MIX
IN THE NEW McFLURRY



Magic Fm New South Beach Location Applauded By Nyc Radio Pro



Continued from Front Page
His daily morning show from 6-10 am reaches 4.4 million listeners in the New York area as well as online on <http://websfm.com>.

Erin Croes, who has been a radio professional for over 20 years shared experiences with Taylor on her Bon Dia Aruba morning show she's been bringing to locals for



years. Taylor, accompanied by the Marketing & Sales team of his host hotel Aruba Marriott Resort & Stellaris Casino, ended the tour with a few group pictures and congratulated the entire Magic FM team on their new location and facilities. Designated among the "World's Best Places to Stay" by Conde Nast Traveler's 2006 Gold List, Aruba Marriott Resort & Stellaris Casino boasts 411 fully renovated guestrooms – the most spacious on the island – each with large, private balconies overlooking



the sparkling waters of the Caribbean Sea. On property, seven restaurants and cafes provide fare from light to elegant, while the largest casino in Aruba, a 6,500 square-foot spa, free-form swimming pool with cascading waterfalls and high-energy health club offer entertaining diversions. To obtain more information call the Aruba Marriott Resort & Stellaris Casino at 888-PARADISE or visit www.arubamarriott.com. In the pictures:

group picture: Erin Croes pictured in the all star Lobby of Magic FM with Jackie Erasmus, Addonsito Croes, Magic FM dj Gerald Bisslik, Dan Taylor and his Marriott hosts Karin Swiers and Keirsin Tjon. Dan Taylor recording a new jingle in the brand new Magic FM radio studio. Dan Taylor and Erin Croes. Dan Taylor enjoying the magnificent view from the Magic FM radio studio overlooking the Palm Beach area. □

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'La face cachée de la lune' extravaganza

The moon peeps out for a special Arion / Casa Tua evening



ORANJESTAD - Seats are limited, but those who are attending the special dinner that is called 'La face cachée de la lune' are in for a true treat! The Arion Wine Company and Casa Tua Barcelona restaurant have teamed up for a stupendous

evening on Friday, August 21. While a new moon peeps out from the night sky, the festive affair starts off with a balcony reception at the restaurant in downtown Oranjestad.

Guests can meet and greet each other here. When they

are seated and chefs David and Gregory Nataf start cooking up a storm.

The 'Mise en bouche' (a delicious tidbit) consisting of steak tartare on a bed of truffle flavored puree is served with a glass of Marqués de Cáceres, Rioja Rosado, Spain. Wine expert Govert van der Hout and Casa Tua's Isabella Kanaima will be on hand to explain the ins and outs of the various dishes and wines that have been carefully selected to complement

each other.

The appetizer is a light, foamy zucchini mousse with a goat cheese cappuccino; it is coupled to a Domaine Neumeyer Riesling 'Les Hospices' Alsace, France. The menu continues with a grouper filet, poached and sautéed in white butter with shaved truffle and porcini mushroom and served in harmony with a Louis Latour Beaujolais-Villages 'Chameroir' Beaujolais, France. The next course is a grilled tenderloin in a Galician red wine sauce; this is paired with a Tenuta di Arceno Chianti Classico Riserva Tuscany, Italy.

The finale of the terrific culinary line-up is a hot tarte tatin with vanilla ice cream, smoothly matched to a Pavois d'Or Sauternes Bordeaux, France. After dinner a cash bar will take care of all the thirsty throats of the diners.

But this is not everything: during dinner guests are invited to let their inner artist out and a virgin canvas is awaiting their bold and artful expressions on a theme. The result of this joint venture will be displayed in the restaurant at a later date. You can call Casa Tua if you'd like to join in the event. □



Special Month of August!

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- Onion Soup
- Conch Fritters
- Escargot
- Salad

Entrée

- **Fresh Catch of the Day** prepared by our local chef just the way you like it.
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- Chocolate or Banana Cake
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At the upcoming Caribbean Sea Jazz Festival

Cosy Cotton blues band features fantastic Grana Louise from the US



ORANJESTAD - The four members of the Cosy Cotton blues band are more than a little happy: they are ecstatic! And this because internationally acclaimed singer, songwriter and music producer Grana

Louise will be belting out her songs together with them. Alexander van Merten (drums), Boudy Loogman (bass guitar) and Bert Devies (guitar) are the original members of the 1980's band,



which used to feature singer Wendy Sheridan. Now, more than 25 years later three of the band's musicians have gotten together for a blues revival show in Holland and the bug bit again! Together with Hammond organ and piano player Joeke Dietrich they



form once again the Cosy Cotton blues band.

Rave reviews accompany the performances of the group, which takes its audience on a musical trip through the southern states of America, culminating in the cotton fields of Louisiana.

The story of Cosy Cotton goes back to 1986 when the band played at blues and jazz festivals, first as a warm-up act, but later playing with big names like BB King, Ray Charles, Robert Cray, the Blues Brothers and Chaka Kahn. The CD that was recorded was huge success as well.

But in 1993 the members of Cosy Cotton decided to venture out into the real world, starting businesses of their own and the band broke up. Last year, however, Bert,



Boudy and Alexander got together again and the magic was back full blast to the joy of the former group's faithful fans. Together with fantastic singer Grana Louise and her powerful, awesome voice Cosy Cotton is sure to soar once more. The Caribbean Sea Jazz Festival on Aruba will be the group's international debut. □



November 20th 2009
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**"FAVI FUNDACION
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Caribbean Academy of Business organizes several workshops

Professor Coos van Tuinen Ph.D. to speak to Aruba

Master Class in Change Management



ORANJESTAD - - Workshops Strategic Marketing, Leadership in 21st Century, Successful Negotiation and Conflict Handling and HRM - Human Capital Valuation - will be organized from Aug 31st till Sep 3rd, 2009 for Executives and Professionals on Aruba. Also a Master Class in Change Management will be organized from Sep 8th till Sep 10th, 2009 and will be provided by Professor Coos van Tuinen Ph.D. from the Netherlands in the Dutch language. If potential students want more information about the part-time Bachelor study Business Administration (Bedrijfskunde), which will start on Aug 25th, 2009 they can attend an information session on Aug 13th, 2009 from 5.00 pm till 7.00 pm. On Friday afternoon Aug 14th, 2009 from 2.00 pm till 4.00 pm an information session will be held for the Master Class in Change Management and the available Master studies at CAoB.

Workshop Strategic Marketing In the Strategic Marketing workshop participants will discuss how to keep their company competitive and trendsetting, how to work on Customer Intimacy, Product Innovation, Operational Excellence, what makes their Company Domain so unique and interesting and which strategic options are possible in their organizations? In this special workshop the professor and the participants will be working on a higher Return by having more Exchange Transactions and by investing in Business Relations and in Reputation. (My Imago is my best Amigo) During this interactive training the participants will work on the strategies they already have. The training will be finished with a valuable working document which can be brought in practice at once and organizations can continue to build on their Business Strategy.

Workshop Leadership in the 21st Century

Since many years for the focus for modern Leaders has been on "Situational Leadership". Especially the theory of Hersey & Blanchard is very popular,

because your Leadership Style is adapted to the task maturity of your employees. More and more Leadership fits into the formula "L = f (P, MW, S) which means that Leadership is the result of the tuning between Person(ality) of the Leading (also: the Ledged), the task and social maturity of your employees and the Situation. During this interactive workshop the professor will cover a detailed historical development of Leadership and the Eco Leader. This new emerging discourse has become powerful since 2000. The ecology of leadership focuses on spirit, ethics and connectivity-creating distributed leadership at local levels. The leadership works to create and sustain an eco-system that includes stakeholders and competitors building coalitions, networks & collaborative relationships. It is not just about the environment but dealing with the internal ecology as well. In short a very valuable and pleasant workshop where participants will be able to bring their leadership qualities a step further.

Workshop Successful Negotiating and Conflict Handling Many times you will find yourself in situations where you need to negotiate, to prevent conflicts or neutralize conflicts where your goal is to find a satisfactoral solution for all parties. During this intensive interactive workshop participants will advance their negotiation skills based on a win-win thought. From different positions solutions will be searched out of higher stakes. You will learn to be determined for what is in stake ("Hard"), but be respectful about your negotiation partner ("Heart"). If conflicts will come up in your work, you will learn to neutralize the conflict and to optimize your relation with the opponent. From a transactional Analysis and the Rational Emotive Therapy you will learn to tighten your communicative skills.

Workshop Human Resources Management (HRM) - Human Capital Valuation (How to Manage Your Staff)

Employees are the capital of your organization. How are you, in the position of Director, Team Leader, Project Manager, able to inspire and motivate your staff? But also, how do you determine the added value of your team members. Does your staff earn money for you? In this workshop professor Coos van Tuinen will go deeper into these facts than in regular HRM workshops. During this workshop participants will

fill in their HRM role according to Plan - Do - Check - Act. In the "Do" participants will find out which activities their personnel carry out and on which quality and quantity level. In the "Check" they will find out the productivity of their staff through monitoring. In the "Act" will be discussed about how to improve productivity. Many times HRM workshops have the learning organization as a subject, but in this workshop the productive organization will also be covered!

Master Class in Change Management

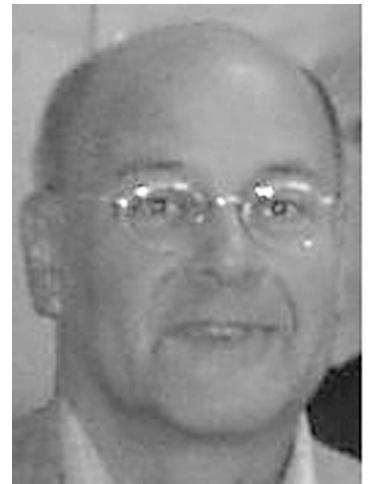
CAoB is organizing a Master Class in Change Management, which will be organized together with Markus Verbeek Business Academy and which will be provided by Prof. Coos van Tuinen Ph.D. In the same week CAoB also organizes a special Kick-off event for students who attend the complete master study. The area of Change Management has been developed to help us understand the behavior of individuals and groups in a better way. Change Management is the management tool which gives insight to managers and helps them find the optimal way to direct the factor personnel in times where all organizations are going

through big changes. The Master Class focuses on knowledge and increase of insight in the area of changing and learning. Methods and skills will be discussed which can be used to better analyze problem situations and design feasible change pathways. The changer's own style, preferences and limitations will be explored. Intervention skills and personal development are only going to be introduced briefly, but there will be an extensive focus job reflection. Many times changes are being accompanied by conflicts. Also ethical matters play a role in Change Management. The professor and the students will also discuss how to deal with this.

Shown on photo: Prof. Coos van Tuinen Ph.D.

Accreditation

CAoB has NVAO accredited part-time studies Bachelor and Master Degree Business Administration with several Management Specializations available and workshops and seminars for Organizational Development and Management Development. For Bachelor and Master Studies the Dutch partners are "Hogeschool NOVI", "Stichting Deeltijd Opleidingen", "Hogeschool Midden Nederland", "Newport Business Academy" and "Markus



Verbeek Business Academy". NVAO (in Dutch: Nederlands-Vlaamse Accreditatieorganisatie) is the Accreditation Organization of the Netherlands and Flanders. The organization was established by international treaty and it ensures the quality of higher education in the Netherlands and Flanders. Students study in the evenings and weekends while working as professionals or executives in the day-time. CAoB is starting a new Bachelor Study Group (3 years) at Aug 25th 2009 and a new Master Study Group (2 years) at Sep 4th, 2009 and is taking this initiative because according to local employers, the local companies need better educated business professionals and executives.



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At MooMba Beach

New weekly Beach Tennis competition starts next week



HADICURARI - 'Got sand, play Beach Tennis' is the slogan of Aruba's hottest sport Beach Tennis. With more than 200 enthusiastic fans playing monthly ranking tournaments, it was high time to start a weekly competition to raise the level of play. Terrific teams signed up for the previous 7-week competition and now it is time to begin the next round.

Play is in different categories, so everyone can play. Monday is singles day, Tuesday is for ladies: Fun, Advanced and Pro, while Wednesday morning continues with ladies of all levels.

Wednesday evening at MooMba Beach is for Fun Men, Intermediate Men and

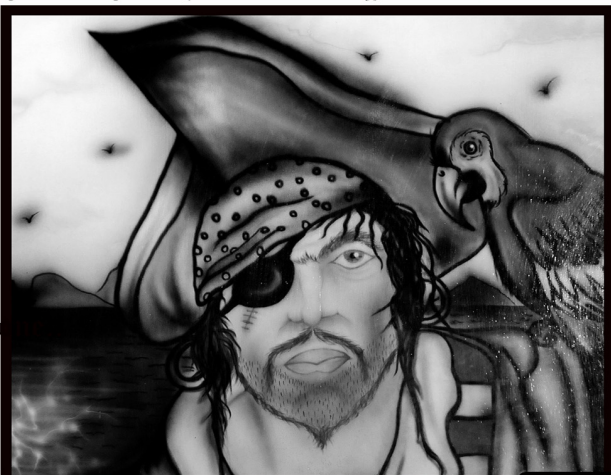


Buccaneer Restaurant

Aruba's Legendary Buccaneer Restaurant, serving the freshest fish and seafood from the sea to your to your plate including steaks, duck, poultry and pasta dishes.

Whether you come with the whole family, bring a group of friends, or enjoy for a romantic dinner for two, Buccaneer has the high quality service and fresh, flavorful international dishes that will make your dining experience a memorable. reservations email us at info@buccaneeraruba.com or call 586-6172

Monday - Saturday 5:30-10 pm



Ahoy Matey bring this ad in for a free glass of house wine



Mixed Doubles. Thursday night will see Advanced Men and Pro Men play their hearts out and Fridays is a Pick-up Night, a Come-and-Play night for all levels.

Competitions start at 6 pm and MooMba Beach has a special discount on its beverages for participants.

Registration for the upcoming

competition is still possible: call Jochem Ros or Sjoerd de Vries at 5926421/5837074.

Get in shape fast, get your energy level soaring and have fun at the same time: just play Beach Tennis! Beach Tennis is powered by Alno Kitchen, ATA, Amstel Bright, Aruba Aloe, Bacardi Mojito, Inter Assure and Monster Energy ☐



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PALM BEACH - There is only one Bugaloe on Aruba: it is the hottest place to be cool and the coolest place to be hot.

Friends and fun are the main ingredients at the beach bar, but great food, drinks and music get a good second place. The sunsets, the breeze and the turquoise ocean are right at the top as well, of course.

People from all over the world get together at Bugaloe: they have a few drinks, a bite to eat, they dance and sway and make new friends. If you have gotten curious here and now, check out the website www.bugaloe.com and you will see at one glance what we are talking about. No words will be needed anymore. Surf to the website for the Bugaloe Event Calendar or leave a note in the Guestbook.



Bugaloe is located at De Palm Pier in Palm Beach between RIU Palace and Radisson Resort.



Bugaloe's daily Happy Hours are considered the starting signal for an evening of partying on the island. Locals mingle with visitors and raise their glasses. When you get hungry, order a scrumptious burger, a gourmet pizza, tasty wings or a salad and party on.

The night is young, the world is going crazy and you are right in the middle of a super happening. What's not to like?

Bugaloe Beach Bar puts on live bands on Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Sunday.

Joyride, PM Band, DJ Jeroen and Marisela & Aquarius are playing the stars from the sky. These musical talents draw the crowds, so be there or be square!

For more information go to www.bugaloe.com.

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Wednesday 6-10pm: PM Band

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Café de Pijp opens its doors at South Beach Center – Palm Beach!

Bring this article for a FREE Heineken draft beer per person



PALM BEACH - Last week, Café de Pijp officially inaugurated its authentic "OUD HOLLANDS CAFÉ" conveniently located at the South Beach Center in Palm Beach opposite Segafredo. Café de Pijp has been operating since June 19th and has now made the opening official with various members of the press and guests. All guests received a warm welcome from the management in a nice and cozy ambiance with entertainment of the band The Equator.

Café de Pijp has been designed and founded by Mr. Alex de Haan. He has a

lot of experience with this kind of specific Oud Hollands Café in the Netherlands. The interior of Café de Pijp, which is almost 60 m2, has been constructed with dark wood materials which give the ambiance a very cozy and warm feeling.

They play all kinds of music, from Dutch, to English to Latin American. Every day you can enjoy the peanut consumption with your favorite drink. This peanut concept "Pelpinda's" is a typical Dutch custom, where the guests of the Dutch bar peel their peanuts and throw the shells on the floor and enjoy doing it! When entering the Dutch bar and encountering all the peanut shells on the floor, don't be surprised, as this is one of the most common custom for a typical Old Dutch Bar in the Netherlands.

Café de Pijp will have several activities programmed for its guests in the near future. These activities include Dart competitions among other cafes and guests, Karaoke nights, Jazz nights and Salsa nights. **Café de Pijp serves delicious snacks for its guests and invites their customers to enjoy these snacks free of charge on Friday afternoons.** Café de Pijp will also have their "Pijpjesavond" where one can buy beer at a very inexpensive price. Café de Pijp will also offer



a special drink of the week for the non beer drinkers. **Heineken draught beer will have a price of only AWG 5,- every day.**

For one month Café de Pijp will have a special Grand Opening offer in newspapers. Bring the newspaper ad and get a FREE Heineken draught beer with this ad per person. Do not miss this special offer, just bring it to Café de Pijp and enjoy your FREE beer in a typical "OUD HOLLANDS CAFÉ" Café

de Pijp offers its customers very attractive consumption prices compared to other bars in the vicinity, a great ambiance and LIVE entertainment by Alex as well!

We invite you to visit us at the South Beach Center and experience the fun yourself! For more information please call us at 745-4706.

Aruba Today & Bon Dia Aruba review Kingdom Games 2009



ORANJESTAD - Seeing that now the Kingdom games 2009 are behind us, we did not want to miss the opportunity to show you some images that we took of different events that we visited. Sometimes in the scorching

heat of the sun, but all members of the press had a good time enjoying all the games and the athletes, making sure everybody got the best shots for all of our daily readers and all of our internet page readers.

Our sister paper "Bon Dia Aruba" shot all the games and we have thousands of images and some of the best shots of the Kingdom Games 2009.

Her Royal Highness Princess Margriet and Pieter van Vollenhoven attended the opening program of the Kingdom Games on Saturday, July 25th, 2009. Every two years, the Kingdom of the Netherlands consisting of Aruba, Netherlands Antilles and Aruba, celebrates Kingdom Games with the goals of: Stimulating Sports Development in the broadest sense of the word on Aruba and the Netherlands Antilles with the youth as the main target.

Developing mutual understanding between youngsters of the Netherlands Antilles, Aruba, and the Netherlands that ought to serve as the basis for mutual respect and togetherness. The Kingdom Games 2009 took place from July 21 to the 27th, 2009. The theme was "Power." The Cultural component to the Kingdom Games was introduced for the first time in July of 2007 alongside the



traditional Kingdom Games that focused primarily on Sports. The first ever Kingdom Games were held in 1965. It was a try to bring the several parts of the Kingdom closer together. In these days these parts were the Netherlands, Suriname and the Netherlands Antilles. In 1975 Suriname became un-dependant and did no longer take part in the Games. Between 1979 and 1983 the Games were only held between the Netherlands and the Antilles, and after that they were cancelled. In 1995 the Games were re-founded by former swimmer and politician Erica Terpstra to bring the youth of the separate countries closer to each other.

The strength of the team of the Netherlands is always changed in order to the strength of the other teams, because normally the level of the Dutch team is much higher compared to the other participants. The Dutch normally participate with regional teams or younger sportspeople to close the gap in quality. □



SPECIAL Aruba TODAY

At Amsterdam Manor

Krista & Michael tie the knot in paradise



EAGLE- Recently Krista Meredith & Michael Akers tied the knot at Eagle beach. The lovebirds met in 2004 through Krista's brother and Michael's sister. Their relationship turned into an everlasting bond as their love grew stronger. Michael

knew he found his bride and proposed on Christmas in 2006. He attached the ring around the neck of a teddy bear and put it under the tree. As Krista went to reach for the teddy bear she was surprised and overjoyed and said "Yes I will marry you."

Krista & Michael choose Aruba after hearing such good things from friends and started planning their wedding with Lissy Lampe of Ceremonies & Celebrations in Aruba.

The beach ceremony took place in front of the famous Divi Tree along the turquoise shores of Aruba's pristine beach at sunset.

Following the ceremony Bella Aruba Photography made sure to capture the romantic evening with photos to last a lifetime.

"The scenery made for an absolutely beautiful wedding and dinner on the beach at Passions was the perfect ending to our wedding day", replied the newlyweds. □

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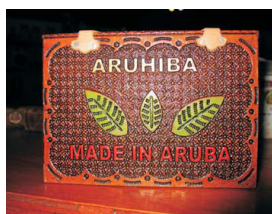
ORANJESTAD- Benjamin Petrocchi started the newest export product of Aruba, locally produced cigars called "Aruhiba". These cigars are produced and cultivated in Aruba.



Petrocchi has always had an interest in the cigar business and has also sold Premium Cuban Cigars, and now he is growing his own tobacco crop. After many attempts and trips to Santo Domingo and Cuba he started his own production and cultivation of Aruhiba Cigars in Aruba. The process took ten years. Petrocchi dedication to the cigars is important for the molding and process of making a perfect cigar which takes a long time. The cigar box is specially designed for the cigars with the logo "Aruhiba".



Petrocchi considers Aruhiba a promotion for Aruba through fine quality cigars. The company sells International cigars as well. Buy a gift box of Aruhiba Corona with five cigars and you will get 1 FREE cigar of \$35. Located at the Historic Dutch Windmill. Open on Sunday from 9am to 8pm. And also at Tamarijn Hotel open from 9am to 1pm. Aruhiba is only available in above mentioned stores. Visit our authentic tobacco farm where cigars are handmade.



BUY & RECEIVE ONE ARUBAN CIGAR FREE WITH THIS FLYER





Study: Weightlifting helps breast cancer survivors

By MARILYNN MARCHIONE,
AP Medical Writer

Breast cancer survivors have been getting bum advice. For decades, many doctors warned that lifting weights or even heavy groceries could cause painful arm swelling. New research shows that weight training actually helps prevent this problem.

"How many generations of women have been told to avoid lifting heavy objects?" Dr. Eric Winer, breast cancer chief at the Dana-Farber Cancer Center in Boston, lamented after seeing the surprising results of the new study. "Women who were doing the lifting actually had fewer arm problems because they had better muscle tone." The study was led by Kathryn Schmitz, an exercise scientist at the University of Pennsylvania, and funded by the federal government. Results are in Thursday's New England Journal of Medicine. More than 2.4 million Americans are breast cancer survivors, and the study could mean a big difference in their quality of life. Cancer treatment-related arm swelling now appears to be one of many ailments made better by exercise — not worse, Schmitz said.

"Fifty years ago we told people who had a heart attack not to exercise anymore," and people with sore backs to heal with bed rest, Schmitz said. "It was well-meaning advice but it was polar opposite of the truth."

Women who have had radiation to the armpit, or lymph nodes removed to check for cancer, can suffer lymphedema — a buildup of fluids that causes painful and unsightly swelling of the arms or hands.

To avoid it, doctors have advised women to avoid using the affected arm to lift toddlers, carry a heavy purse or scrub floors. Even activities

like golf and tennis raised concern.

Women think, "Oh, my God, I need to baby the arm," Schmitz said.

Lifting weights — which boosts mood, muscle mass, bone strength and weight control — was thought to be a bad idea for women prone to lymphedema.

Schmitz challenged that notion with a small study several years ago, finding that weight training did not make lymphedema worse. Her new study is the first one large and long enough to give clear proof that this is so, and even suggests that weightlifting can help.

It involved 141 breast cancer survivors who had suffered lymphedema. Half were told not to change their exercise habits. The rest were given 90-minute weightlifting classes twice a week for 13 weeks at community gyms, mostly YMCAs.

They wore a custom-fitted compression garment on the affected arm and gradually worked up to more challenging weights and repetitions. For the next 39 weeks, they continued these exercises on their own.

The women's arms were measured monthly. After one year, fewer weightlifters had suffered lymphedema flare-ups — 14 percent versus 29 percent of the others. Weightlifters reported fewer symptoms and greater strength. Rates of change in arm size due to swelling were similar in both groups.

"I found it was really very effective. It not only gave me strength and mobility but it improved my balance and coordination," said one participant, Clare Faber, 66, of suburban Philadelphia. "It really does offer women hope."

Another participant, Gay McArthur, 56, of Smithfield, N.J., has continued

weightlifting on her own since the study ended.

"When I first got diagnosed with lymphedema, they said I couldn't lift more than five pounds," she said. But weight training caused no problems and has made her feel better, she said. It also should save money, though the study did not measure this, Wendy Demark-Wahnefried, of the University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, wrote in an editorial in the medical journal. In the study, the group of weightlifters made only 77 visits to doctors or physical therapists for lymphedema flare-ups versus 195 visits for the others, she noted. □



YMCA of Burlington County Wellness Director Joann Agolia helps cancer survivor Gay McArthur of Smithville, N.J., with a weight lifting exercise program, Tuesday, Aug. 11, 2009, in Mount Laurel, N.J. For decades, many doctors warned that lifting weights or even heavy groceries could cause painful arm swelling. New research shows that weight training actually helps prevent this problem.

(AP Photo/Mel Evans)

Any spread of breast cancer raises risk of return

By MARILYNN MARCHIONE,
AP Medical Writer

Breast cancer patients with even the tiniest spread of the disease to a lymph node have a much higher risk of it recurring years later and may need more treatment than just surgery, new research suggests.

For years, doctors and patients have struggled with what to do about a microscopic tumor or stray cancer cells in a lymph node. Women with "micro tumors" usually are given estrogen-blocking drugs, chemotherapy or both; those with isolated cancer cells usually are not, because those were thought to be of low concern.

The new study challenges that view. It suggests that either type of metastasis, or spread, raises a woman's risk of having cancer show up in the breast or anywhere else in the next five years by about 50 percent.

"This took an area that was very gray and I think made it black and white," said Dr. Linda Vahdat, director of breast cancer research at Weill Cornell Medical College and an adviser for the breast cancer patient Web site of ASCO, the American Society of Clinical Oncology.

"I think it will influence treatment," she said of the study. "If we're considering treating the patient, we probably should."

Dr. Daniel Hayes, director of breast cancer treatment at the University of Michigan, agreed.

"It really does look like our biases are wrong," he said. "For the first time, it suggests that isolated tumor cells or micrometastases do have biological significance."

Vahdat and Hayes had no role in the study,

which was done by researchers throughout the Netherlands. Results are in Thursday's New England Journal of Medicine.

The study is not ideal: It just observed a large number of women rather than assigning some to get treatment and comparing how they fared to others who were not treated. The study also was done at a time when treatment was less aggressive and in a country where doctors had been treating breast cancer more conservatively than in the United States.

In the U.S., many women with early stage breast cancer are given hormone blockers.

"The big issue is, should these patients also get chemotherapy?" Hayes said.

However, not all women benefit from chemotherapy even when their risk of a recurrence is high, said Dr. Eric Winer, breast cancer chief at the Dana-Farber Cancer Center in Boston.

"Patients are looking for more specific treatment" tailored to their individual tumor type — not necessarily more or less treatment, he said.

The Dutch study involved more than 2,700 women with low-risk, early stage cancer — small tumors that did not seem aggressive. All had surgery to remove their breast tumors. All of their armpit lymph nodes or a few key ones called "sentinel" nodes were removed and checked for signs of cancer. Doctors do this by examining tissue slices from the nodes and using special stains to make cancer cells show up. Larger tumors in lymph nodes already trigger further treatment. A micro tumor is a cluster of cells less than 2 millimeters — smaller than one-tenth of an inch. □

BUSINESS

Aruba TODAY

Stocks fluctuate after downbeat jobs, retail data



Traders work on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange, August 3, 2009.

By SARA LEPRO,
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK — Investors kept their focus on an economic recovery, shaking off disappointing news and buying stocks in some riskier industries.

Wall Street's major indexes wavered Thursday but held on to their gains from the big rally that followed the Federal Reserve's upbeat comments one day earlier. Financial, technology and energy companies were among the big winners, while stocks in defensive, or relatively safer, industries like health care and utilities fell. Retailers declined after a worse-than-expected report on retail sales.

Meanwhile, Treasury prices rose after the government had a successful auction of 30-year bonds. The Treasury Department issued a total of \$75 billion of debt this week as part of its ongoing efforts to fund the government's stimulus programs, and investors were relieved that the market was able to absorb such a huge supply.

Wall Street's showing Thursday was a sign of the market's strength in the day's economic reports that suggested the economic

REUTERS/Brendan McDermid

recovery could be slowed by a weak consumer. Investors seemed to look past the latest news and focus on the Fed's more upbeat assessment of the economy. Stocks soared Wednesday after the Fed reassured investors that the economy was "leveling out," not just easing its decline.

"I think investors are prepared to give the economy some time to show a strong improvement," said Avery Shenfeld, chief economist at CIBC World Markets.

Among the day's reports, the Commerce Department said retail sales fell 0.1 percent in July, significantly worse than the 0.7 percent increase economists expected. Retail sales are considered a strong indicator of economic recovery because consumer spending accounts for more than two-thirds of all economic activity.

A weekly report on unemployment also came in worse than projected. The Labor Department said the number of newly laid-off workers filing claims for unemployment benefits rose unexpectedly to a seasonally adjusted 558,000, from 554,000 the previous week. Analysts were expecting new

claims to drop to 545,000.

In midafternoon trading, the Dow Jones industrial average fell 6.12, or 0.1 percent, to 9,355.49 after rising 120 Wednesday in response to the Fed's statement.

The Standard & Poor's 500 index rose 1.94, or 0.2 percent, to 1,007.75, while the Nasdaq composite index rose 3.90, or 0.2 percent, to 2,002.62.

In other trading, the Russell 2000 index of smaller companies rose 0.71, or 0.1 percent, to 572.88.

More than three stocks rose for every two that fell on the New York Stock Exchange, where volume came to a very light 294.9 million shares.

Financial stocks led the day's gains, buoyed by news that the hedge fund run by John Paulson bought about 168 million shares of Bank of America Corp. Paulson foresaw the distress in subprime mortgages and reaped billions by betting against the related securities, so his purchases of Bank of America stock are seen as a vote of confidence in the bank's future.

"He gives a lot of credibility because he certainly saw the danger on the credit side," said Anton Schutz, portfolio manager of Burnham Financial Industries Fund and Burnham Financial Services Fund.

Bank of America rose 79 cents, or 5 percent, to \$16.72. Regional banks also rose significantly after tumbling earlier in the week on downbeat comments from an analyst that raised doubts about some banks' ability to improve their earnings in the second half of the year.

Texas Instruments Inc. rose 55 cents, or 2.3 percent, to \$24.43 after an analyst upgraded the stock. That helped lift other technology stocks. □



People throng a retail area in Paris, Thursday Aug. 13, 2009. France's economy grew 0.3 percent in the second quarter, ending the country's worst recession in decades in large part thanks to a rise in exports, according to government estimates released Thursday.

(AP Photo/Jacques Brinon)

France, Germany return to growth in 2nd quarter

By PAN PYLAS,
AP Business Writer

LONDON — Government programs to support the auto industry helped Germany and France return to economic growth in the second quarter, rebounds that stoked hopes the recession in the wider 16-country euro area may also end sooner than thought.

Europe's two biggest economies each saw growth of 0.3 percent from the previous three-month period, surprising analysts' expectations for equivalent declines and technically ending their worst recession in decades.

The French and German increases marked a stunning turnaround from the previous quarter, when Germany shrank by a massive 3.5 percent and France contracted by 1.3 percent.

The unexpected increases in Germany and France meant that the 16-country euro area contracted at a sharply reduced rate of 0.1 percent, much less than the 0.5 percent anticipated in the markets.

Though the euro zone drop was the fifth straight quarterly decline, it was a marked improvement on the record 2.5 percent fall recorded in the first quarter and was even better than the 0.3 percent quarterly decline recorded in the U.S., the world's single largest economy.

France's Finance Minister Christine Lagarde credited the government-backed stimulus plan for the auto industry for the country's ability to weather the economic storm and return to growth.

"France is finally coming out of the red," she said on RTL radio. Lagarde later told Le Figaro newspaper that she expected the economy to demonstrate "a complete exit from the crisis" in mid-2010. "We are clearly in the stabilization phase," she was quoted as saying in an interview released Thursday night.

Countries across Europe have established so-called "cash for clunkers" programs in the hope that wary consumers will trade in their old cars for newer and more efficient models — in the process kick-starting the economy.

Unicredit economist Andreas Rees reckons that the export-dependent auto sector contributed 0.25 percentage point to overall German GDP growth. □

Retail sales dip unexpectedly, jobless claims rise

By CHRISTOPHER S. RUGABER,

AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON — Retail sales disappointed in July and the number of newly laid-off workers filing claims for unemployment benefits rose unexpectedly last week. The latest government reports reinforced concerns about how quickly consumers will be able to contribute to a broad economic recovery.

"There is really no positive spin to put on these numbers," Jennifer Lee, an economist with BMO Capital Markets, wrote in a research note. "The U.S. consumer remains very weak. The jobs situation, while slowly improving, is still dismal."

The Commerce Department said Thursday that retail sales fell 0.1 percent last month. Economists had expected a gain of 0.7 percent.

While autos, helped by the start of the Cash for Clunkers program, showed a 2.4 percent jump — the biggest in six months — there was widespread weakness elsewhere. Gasoline stations, department stores, electronics outlets and furniture stores all reported declines.

Some of Europe's largest economies also benefited from government programs to support the auto industry. Germany and France returned to economic growth in the second quarter, raising hopes the recession in the 16-country euro area may end sooner than thought. Europe's two biggest economies each grew 0.3 percent from the previous three-month period, surprising analysts and technically ending their worst recession in decades.

The July dip in U.S. retail sales was the first setback following two months of modest gains. Excluding autos, sales fell 0.6 percent, worse than the 0.1 percent rise economists had forecast. And excluding both auto and gas purchases, retail sales fell 0.4 percent — the fifth straight monthly decline.

Households are working to pay down debt and add to savings, longer-term trends along with little job growth making it "probable that the U.S.

consumer will not be much of a help during the early stages of the economic recovery," Joshua Shapiro, chief U.S. economist at consulting firm MFR Inc., wrote in a note to clients.

The Labor Department said initial claims increased to a seasonally adjusted 558,000, from 554,000 the previous week. Analysts expected new claims to drop to 545,000, according to Thomson Reuters. The number of people remaining on the benefit rolls, meanwhile, fell to 6.2 million from 6.34 million the previous week. Analysts had expected a smaller decline. The continuing claims data lags initial claims by one week.

The four-week average of initial claims, which smooths out fluctuations, rose by 8,500 to 565,000. That reverses six straight weeks of decline.

A weak job market hurt sales last month. Gas station sales plunged 2.1 percent in July, due more to falling pump prices than weak demand. Excluding that drop, retail sales would have posted a modest 0.1 percent increase.

Department store sales fell 1.6 percent and the broader category of general merchandise stores, which includes big chains such as Wal-Mart Stores Inc. and Target Corp., posted a decline of 0.8 percent.

Wal-Mart on Thursday reported virtually flat second-quarter income compared with a year ago, but the results beat Wall Street expectations and the world's largest retailer raised the low end of its profit outlook as a series of cost-cutting moves draw frugal shoppers away from rivals.

Still, the July weakness in overall retail sales highlighted worries about the potential strength of the recovery from the recession. Consumer spending accounts for about 70 percent of total economic activity.

"Households are in no position to drive a decent economic recovery," Paul Dales, U.S. economist at Capital Economics, wrote in a note to clients.

While there have been recent signs of stability in the U.S.

housing market after three years of plunging prices, record foreclosures persist. The number of U.S. households on the verge of losing their homes rose 7 percent in July, as the foreclosure crisis continued to outpace government efforts to limit the damage.

Foreclosure filings rose 32 percent from the same month last year, RealtyTrac Inc. said Thursday. More than 360,000 households, or one in every 355 homes, received a foreclosure-related notice. That's the highest monthly level since the foreclosure-listing firm began publishing the data more than four years ago.

The Federal Reserve on Wednesday delivered a more upbeat assessment of the economy. □



In this Aug. 11, 2009 photo, shoppers move through the check-out line after a shopping trip to Wal-Mart in Tallahassee, Fla. Retail sales outside of autos turned in a disappointing performance in July, underscoring concerns about the timing and durability of a recovery from the worst recession since World War II.

(AP Photo/Phil Coale)

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Publisher

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Caribbean Speed
Printing N.V.
Westraat # 22

Oranjestad, Aruba
Tel: (297) 582-7800
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The Other 'Hispanic' Nominee

Larry Elder

Creators Syndicate – “For the first time in a long time,” said one “Hispanic” man in the street interviewed on cable television, “I feel really proud.” Others in the “Hispanic community” rejoiced as Sonia Sotomayor became the first Hispanic justice on the Supreme Court.

Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., in her statement at the beginning of Sotomayor’s confirmation hearings, said: “Your nomination I view with a great sense of personal pride. You are indeed a very special woman. You have overcome adversity and disadvantages (emphasis added).” Senate Majority Whip Dick Durbin, D-Ill., said, “Judge Sotomayor, you have overcome many obstacles (emphasis added) in your life that have given you an understanding of the daily realities and struggles faced by everyday people.” Let’s talk about the obstacles, adversity and disadvantages of another Hispanic nominee, one whom many thought — pre-Sotomayor — worthy of future consideration as the first Hispanic Supreme Court justice.

Born in Honduras — the child of a broken home — this nominee immigrated to the United States at 17 years of age, arriving with a limited command of the English language. The nominee’s mother spoke no English. But four years later, the nominee graduated magna cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa with a bachelor’s degree from Columbia University. The nominee went on to Harvard Law School, served as editor of the Harvard Law Review and received a Juris Doctor degree magna cum laude.

The nominee served as a clerk at the U.S. Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court, practiced law in New York, and then served as an assistant U.S. attorney, later joining the Justice Department as an assistant to the solicitor general for the Clinton administration.

Overcoming personal adversity? The nominee’s spouse died from an accidental overdose of alcohol and sleeping pills, after the couple had suffered through a miscarriage.

The American Bar Association — whose evaluation was once hailed as “the gold standard by which judicial candidates are judged,” by Senate Judiciary Committee member (and current chairman) Patrick Leahy, D-Vt. — unanimously gave the nominee its top “well-qualified” rating. Yet the nominee — despite an admirable record of overcoming personal and professional “obstacles” and “adversity” — met with a hailstorm of opposition, including a filibuster to prevent an up-or-down vote on the Senate floor.

The Senate only had 55 votes to end the filibuster, but it requires 60 votes to end one. □

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BEN SARGENT
Aruba Today
8/12



The war on drugs needs a timeout

By Rafael Pardo and Juan Gabriel Tokatlian

Bogotá, Colombia; and Buenos Aires – On Monday, President Obama restated his support for Mexican President Felipe Calderón’s aggressive tactics in the fight against drug trafficking. He also reiterated his support for a drug security plan with Mexico that is similar to the failed drug plans of past administrations. Before Washington ramps up yet another losing war on drugs, it should take a clear-eyed look at how its current strategies are affecting the supply and demand of drugs. Congressman Eliot Engel (D) of New York has introduced a bill to do just that.

Washington would be wise to back Congressman Engel’s initiative because there has not been a thorough, frank evaluation of the fight against drugs in decades. The drug czar office’s annual report is not enough. Recommendations by an independent commission, however, could generate the consensus and strategy we sorely need.

The cornerstone of US drug policy at home and abroad is to reduce the drug supply (from crop eradication to border seizures) in order to increase the domestic price of drugs. The idea is to deter both potential consumers and producers from entering the drug market. It hasn’t.

Since May 1971, when President Richard Nixon proclaimed a “war on drugs,” Washington and the Western Hemisphere have been unable to win it. Every claimed victory has turned out to be, in the end, a fiasco.

Consider Mexico and Jamaica in the 1970s and early ‘80s. Mexico cracked down on marijuana production. But that simply shifted production to Colombia and then to the US, while allowing heroin production and cocaine trafficking to rise. Jamaica’s effort against marijuana similarly backfired and today, drug-

related violence is at a high.

Colombia has been the most high-profile, high-stakes test case of the hemisphere’s struggle against drugs.

A decade ago, the Clinton administration launched the multiyear, billion-dollar Plan Colombia.

The Bush administration then expanded Plan Colombia and provided even more funding. With those funds, Bogotá has spent the past 10 years eradicating illicit crops over an area that is 2-1/2 times the size of the state of Delaware. It has extradited more than 600 Colombian nationals to the United States. It has dismantled the large, brutal, Medellín and Cali cartels; has criminalized all the phases of this illicit business; and has launched an attack on both guerrillas and paramilitary-linked drug emporiums.

And yet, after all that, production of cocaine in Colombia actually increased, and the drug network remains intact.

So why is the Obama administration extending a similar plan — the Mérida Initiative — for Mexico?

Plan Colombia didn’t work for a number of reasons. It was based on a lopsided policy of shared responsibility that did not work in this case. The emphasis was on supply control and not on demand reduction. What good does cutting back on cocoa leaf production do if there are still people addicted and willing to pay high sums for cocaine? It relied too heavily on short-term benchmarks instead of long term implications. Then there were the negative effects on human rights, civil-military relations, the environment, and the rule of law — all very fragile in Latin America.

If Mr. Obama intends to avoid a potentially catastrophic scenario in a bordering country, then he should support Engel’s initiative. □

Michael Jackson's glittery glove up for auction

By SANDY COHEN,
AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES — The glittery glove that Michael Jackson wore when he unveiled his moonwalk on TV in 1983 is hitting the auction block.

This one isn't like his other glittery gloves, which were made for the right hand and adorned with hand-sewn crystals. This left-handed glove, which accompanied Jackson's fedora and dance moves on Motown's 25th-anniversary TV special, is a modified, store-bought glove covered with a mesh of rhinestones.

The glove, which Darren Julien of Julien's Auctions called "the Holy Grail of Michael Jackson memorabilia," will be featured alongside other one-of-a-kind items — such as an early Madonna demo tape and unreleased Jimi Hendrix lyrics — at the Nov. 21 "Music Icons" auction at the Hard Rock Cafe in New York City's Times Square.

Walter "Clyde" Orange, a founding member of the Commodores, has been holding onto the glove since Jackson gave it to him in 1983.

Orange said he got to know Jackson when the Commodores toured with the Jackson 5 in the 1970s. Orange would always ask the young entertainer for an autograph, but Jackson refused, saying Orange

was the more famous of the two. The autograph request became a private joke.

They met again in March 1983 when the Motown special was taped. Jackson sang with his brothers, then took the stage alone to wow the world with his moonwalk during his solo performance of "Billie Jean."

Orange found his friend backstage and again requested an autograph. Jackson gave him the glove instead.

After Jackson's June 25 death at age 50, Orange decided the glove was too significant to keep.

"There's a hundred other gloves out there, but this is the one you want. He blew up after that (performance) with 'Billie Jean,'" Orange, 62, said in an interview. "The world should see this. This is the first. That's the song that made him shoot through the roof as a superstar."

Orange said he hopes the glove will find a permanent home at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame or a similar institution. And he's happy that proceeds from the sale will benefit MusiCares, an organization that helps musicians struggling with substance abuse.

"Just for the world to see it, that means the world to me," Orange said. □

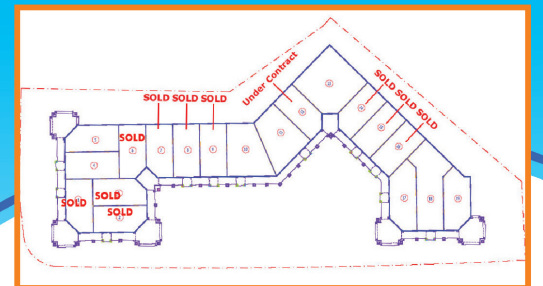


This image released by Julien's Auctions shows Michael Jackson's glove from his 1983 performance of Billie Jean at the Motown 25 television special where he performed the Moonwalk for the first time. The glove will be auctioned on Saturday, Nov. 21, 2009, at the Hard Rock Cafe in New York City's Times Square.

(AP Photo/Julien's Auctions)

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Tiny Damselfish May Destroy A Caribbean Reef



A longfin damselfish patrols its algae garden off the coast of Bonaire. Damselfish kill a section of the coral, and then wait for algae to grow in the dead spot. On this coral, only a few live sections remain.

by Richard Harris

Scientists say the world's coral reefs could go extinct during our children's lifetimes. Human activities are putting this beautiful ecosystem at risk. Some risks are obvious — such as global warming, which results in overheated seas. Others are more subtle. Consider the case of the damselfish:

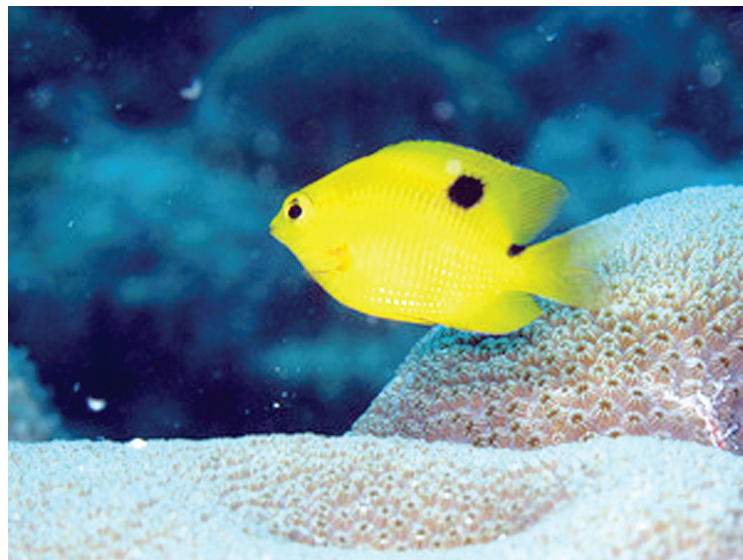
Looking off the coast from the Caribbean island of Bonaire, the glistening, aquamarine sea looks peaceful. But just under the waves, there's a war going on.

It's between the fragile and colorful corals, and a creeping menace: algae.

It's a turf battle for precious real estate. And it's a fight to the death.

Algae Farmers, Coral Killers

Both the corals and the algae have natural allies. Corals get help from parrot fish, which eat the intruding algae from the reef. And



This three-spot damselfish is one of several damselfish species that create algae farms on corals.

algae get help from certain species of damselfish.

"Damselfish are these little fish and what they do is they make little yards on the bottom of the reef," says marine biologist Mark Vermeij. These yards — or pastures, you could call them — are patches of algae that the fish actually farm right on the coral.

"And in order to make a place for one of these yards, they basically kill the coral," Vermeij says. "So they go to the coral,

they start sucking on little polyps until they die. And then when that happens, little algae establish on that died-off patch."

Once the algae start growing, the damselfish becomes not just a farmer but a warrior.

"They're little feisty guys," Vermeij says. "There are rainbow parrot fish, almost a meter long, and this damselfish that's not much

immemorial. But lately, the story includes hooks, lines and sinkers.

People don't eat these little damselfish, but Vermeij says people do eat bigger fish on the reef. And that's where the story takes a twist.

"Twenty years ago, life on these reefs for little fish was basically annoying. Because there were all these big fish around that would eat you if you weren't paying attention. And then because a lot of people took the big fish out, it's a much safer environment for these little fish," Vermeij says.

A Booming Damselfish Population

As a result, the damselfish population has boomed. As Vermeij tells the story, Henry DeBey listens in. He's a graduate student at Yale University. He's here on Bonaire to get a better

handle on the damselfish story. And he says it turns out that one predatory fish in particular goes after the damselfish. It's called a graysby.

"Graysbys, which are a type of grouper, are a local favorite, a local specialty," DeBey says. "So Bonarians like to fish graysby."

As a result, graysby populations have been in severe decline along Bonaire's reef. DeBey and a fellow graduate student from Yale are here to quantify just how much graysby overfishing has led to a surge in damselfish and their algae gardens. They want to provide ironclad evidence that the marine park manager can use, to give local fishermen a Hobson's choice.

"Feel free to fish graysbys," the marine park manager could say, "but corals will decline as a result, indirectly. And everything else that depends on those corals, including the graysbys ultimately, will also go down."

And while algae form a natural ecosystem, it's not nearly as interesting and diverse as a coral reef.

And it's the thriving coral reef that attracts divers to Bonaire from far and wide. They keep the local economy humming. So there's a lot at stake, in the story of the little damselfish.



Seen from above, a three-spot damselfish's algae garden covers much of this coral. The identification tag, top, allows researchers to track and monitor the site.

bigger than a goldfish just comes out. This parrotfish is aiming at feeding in that guy's little meadow. And the little damselfish just comes out and scares that thing away. They're aggressive as hell."

And the more successful they are, the more the coral is killed off and replaced by their algae gardens.

It's a drama that has been going on since time



Graysbys, like this one, normally prey on damselfish and help keep their populations in check. But as graysby populations decline due to overfishing, damselfish numbers are increasing.





U.S. defense chief sees 'a few years' in Afghanistan

ANNE GEARAN
LARA JAKES

Associated Press Writers

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. Defense Department presented a grim portrait of the Afghanistan war on Thursday, offering no assurances about how long Americans will be fighting there or how many U.S. combat troops it will take to win.

Defeating the Taliban and al-Qaida will take "a few years," Defense Secretary Robert Gates said, with success on a larger scale in the desperately poor country a much longer proposition. He acknowledged that the Taliban has a firm hold on parts of the country that President Barack Obama has called vital to U.S. security. Congress wants answers to what lawmakers described as basic questions to soothe a war-weary American public.

"In the intelligence business, we always used to categorize information in two ways: secrets and mysteries," Gates, a former CIA director, told a Pentagon news conference.

He added: "Mysteries were those where there were too many variables to predict. And I think that how long U.S. forces will be in Afghanistan is in that area."

With 62,000 U.S. troops already in the country and another 6,000 headed there by the end of the year, Gates suggested Washington has little appetite to add many more.

He said his top commander in Afghanistan, Gen. Stanley McChrystal, is free to ask for whatever he needs, but Gates said when the general submits a revised war plan in the

coming weeks, it will contain no request to expand the U.S. fighting force.

McChrystal is expected to identify shortfalls that could be filled by U.S. forces, but a formal request would come only later. The White House has made no secret of its skepticism about further troop additions in Afghanistan, and Gates said Thursday he still was worried that too many American forces could turn Afghans against those trying to help them.

Obama has made Afghanistan one of his top foreign policy priorities. His administration, however, is grappling how to refocus on Afghanistan, which the United States invaded in October 2001 to hunt for al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden, while disentangling 130,000 American troops from Iraq.

In a report released this week, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee warned the Obama administration that unanswered questions about lingering U.S. involvement in Afghanistan could frustrate the public.

"The administration has raised the stakes by transforming the Afghan war from a limited intervention into a more ambitious and potentially risky counterinsurgency," the Senate report concluded. "These core questions about commitment and sacrifice can be answered only through a rigorous and informed national debate."

The committee's chairman, Democratic Sen. John Kerry, cited "risks and rewards associated with our increasing commitment to the war in Afghanistan."

Continued on Page B3

South Carolina wants ethics probe of governor



In this April 3, 2009 file photo, South Carolina Gov. Mark Sanford fields questions during a news conference in Columbia, S.C. Embattled South Carolina Gov. Mark Sanford is meeting with his Cabinet members Tuesday Aug. 10, 2009, a day after a state senator said the Republican governor violated state travel laws.

Associated Press

MEG KINNARD

Associated Press Writer

COLUMBIA, South Carolina (AP) — South Carolina's attorney general said Thursday he wants state ethics commissioners to review Gov. Mark Sanford's use of state aircraft and any other potential violations of state law.

Continued on Page B5



Taiwan military soldiers rescue a villager on an emergency cable sling strung across the Ba Si Lan river in Sinfa, Taiwan, Thursday, Aug. 13, 2009, five days after flash flooding from Typhoon Morakot took the lives of 32 fellow villagers.

Associated Press

Taiwanese hauled to safety across raging river

PETER ENAV

Associated Press Writer

SINFA, Taiwan (AP) — Barefoot and helmeted, the frightened survivors of deadly Typhoon Morakot dangled high over jagged rocks and a raging river Thursday as soldiers hauled them to safety one by one along a 100-foot (30-meter)-long cable.

On the far side, a few dozen waited near a hand-painted sign on the craggy foundation of a destroyed bridge: "32 people died here SOS."

Continued on Page B8

Report: Cheney felt Bush stopped taking his advice



In this June 1, 2009 file photo, former Vice President Dick Cheney speaks at the National Press Club in Washington.

WASHINGTON (AP) — Former Vice President Dick Cheney believes his old boss, President George W. Bush, gradually turned away from his advice during their second term in the White House, showing a surprising independence as he

Associated Press started taking more flexible positions on a range of issues, The Washington Post reported Wednesday.

Cheney, often described as the most influential vice president in U.S. history, has been discussing his years in

office in informal talks with authors, diplomats, policy experts and past colleagues, the Post said, as he works on a memoir due out in 2011 from Simon & Schuster's Threshold Editions.

Robert Barnett, who negotiated Cheney's book contract, passed word to potential publishers that the memoir would be packed with news, said the article published on the Post Web site, and Cheney himself has said, without explanation, that "the statute of limitations has expired" on many of his secrets.

The book will cover Cheney's long career from chief of staff under President Gerald Ford to vice president under Bush. "When the president made decisions that I didn't agree with, I still supported him and didn't go out and undercut him," Cheney said, according

to Stephen Hayes, his authorized biographer. "Now we're talking about after we've left office. I have strong feelings about what happened. ... And I don't have any reason not to forthrightly express those views."

According to the author of the Post piece, Barton Gellman, who earlier wrote a book on Cheney called "Angler," the former vice president believes Bush made concessions to public sentiment, something Cheney views as moral weakness. After years of praising Bush as a man of resolve, Cheney now intimates that the former president turned out to be more like an ordinary politician in the end, Gellman says.

"In the second term, he felt Bush was moving away from him," Gellman quoted a participant in the recent

gathering, describing Cheney's reply. "He said Bush was shackled by the public reaction and the criticism he took. Bush was more malleable to that. The implication was that Bush had gone soft on him, or rather Bush had hardened against Cheney's advice. He'd showed an independence that Cheney didn't see coming." The Post quoted John P. Hannah, Cheney's second-term national security adviser, as saying Cheney remains driven, now as before, by the possibility of terrorists obtaining nuclear weapons from a nation hostile to the U.S.

What is new, Hannah said, is Cheney's readiness to acknowledge "doubts about the main channels of American policy during the last few years," a period encompassing most of Bush's second term □



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DEFENSE CHIEFS Continued from Page B1

As the fight moves toward its ninth year starting in October, Gates said allied forces must show this year that they are turning the tide.

"It's just not possible to predict specific periods of time when you're in a conflict like this, where ... the enemy has a vote and where there are so many variables," Gates said.

Appearing alongside Gates, the nation's second-highest ranking military officer agreed there is no date

certain for an exit.

The vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Marine Gen. James Cartwright, said he is looking for evidence of U.S. and NATO troops increasingly turning security missions over to Afghan forces as a sign of when Americans might ramp down their presence.

"When you start to see that attitude change, then you start to have a sense that things are going to move in a direction that would be towards the end of the violence side of this equation," Cartwright said.

The Senate report also noted the wide-ranging timeline for U.S. troops in the fight cited by unidentified military leaders, policymakers and outside experts around Washington: anywhere from two years to more than a decade.

"None of the civilian officials or military officers interviewed in Afghanistan and elsewhere expected substantial progress in the short term. They talked in terms of years two, five and 10," the report noted.

The varying timelines, in part, may reflect politics.

Long-lost pilot's remains returned to Florida

JACKSONVILLE, Florida (AP) — The remains of Navy pilot Michael Scott Speicher returned to his Florida home on Thursday, 18 years after his FA-18 Hornet was shot down on the first night of the 1991 Gulf War.

Speicher's remains arrived at the Jacksonville Naval Air Station around 3 p.m. EDT (1900 GMT). About ten minutes later his coffin was rolled off the plane draped with the U.S. flag. It was to remain at the All Saints Chapel on the base overnight. Speicher's ex-wife and his children placed roses on his casket before it was loaded into a hearse. Several sailors stood at attention and lined the runway as the hearse passed by.

Buddy Harris, who was Speicher's best friend and who later married his widow, Joanne, accompanied the casket on the flight from Dover, Delaware, to Florida. On Friday, Speicher's casket will first be taken to the Memorial Wall outside Jacksonville Municipal Stadium. The hearse will drive by locations with ties to Speicher's life. He will be buried at Jacksonville Memory Gardens in a private ceremony.

Speicher was a native of the Kansas City area and moved to Florida when he was a teenager.

He graduated from Florida State University in 1980 with a business administration degree. The school's \$1.2

million Scott Speicher Tennis Complex was dedicated in 1993.

Speicher will be buried in a private family ceremony at Jacksonville Memory Gardens after the motorcade.

Defense officials originally declared Speicher killed in action hours after his plane was shot down over west-central Iraq. Then-Defense Secretary Dick Cheney announced on television that Speicher was the first casualty of the Gulf War.

Ten years after the crash, the Navy changed Speicher's status to missing in action, citing

an absence of evidence that Speicher had died. In October 2002, the Navy switched his status to "missing/captured," although it has never said what evidence it had that he may have been in captivity.

Over the years, critics contended the Navy had not done enough, particularly right after the crash, to search for the 33-year-old pilot.

The military recovered bones and multiple skeletal fragments, and Speicher was identified by matching a jawbone and dental records and later by DNA reference samples from family members.



U.S. Marine Cpl. Russell walks through a dried up poppy field while on a joint clearance mission with Afghan National Army soldiers to flush Taliban insurgents from the town of Dahaneh, Thursday, Aug. 13, 2009, in the Helmand Province of Afghanistan.

Associated Press

Congress has grown wary of approving annual war chests after years of ever-increasing costs for Iraq. Obama has asked Congress for \$68 billion next year to pay for defense spending in Afghanistan. The U.S. ambassador to Afghanistan, Karl Eikenberry, recently asked for another \$2.5 billion for nonmilitary spending. The Washington Post reported this week.

Military officials believe the Afghanistan mission can succeed only if troops are there far longer, from

five years to 12 years.

Cartwright suggested that some changes will be needed "pretty soon."

"The IED fight is pretty lethal," Cartwright said, referring to improvised explosive devices left on roadsides which are now the cause of the majority of U.S. and NATO deaths.

Last month 49 coalition troops died in bomb attacks, a more than a six-fold increase from eight killed in roadside and suicide bomb attacks in July 2008, according to U.S. figures.



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Former Alaska Gov. stands by 'death panel' claim



In this Sunday, July 26, 2009, Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin gives her resignation speech in Fairbanks, Alaska during a swearing in ceremony where she turned over gubernatorial power to Lt. Sean Parnell. Former Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin called President Barack Obama's health plan "downright evil" Friday Aug. 7, 2009 in her first online comments since leaving office, saying in a Facebook posting that he would create a "death panel" that would deny care to the neediest Americans.

Associated Press

MATTHEW DALY

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Former Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin refused to retreat from her debunked claim that a proposed health care overhaul

would create "death panels," as the growing furor over end-of-life consultations forced a key group of U.S. senators to abandon the idea in their bill. Sen. Chuck Grassley, a Republican and one of six

lawmakers negotiating on a Senate bill, said Thursday they had dropped end-of-life provisions from consideration "entirely because of the way they could be misinterpreted and implemented incorrectly." In a posting on the social network Facebook titled "Concerning Death Panels," Palin, last year's Republican vice presidential nominee, argued Wednesday night that the elderly and ailing would be coerced into accepting minimal end-of-life care to reduce health care costs based on the Democratic bill in the House of Representatives. But there will be no "death panels" under the legislation being considered. In fact, the provision in the bill would allow Medicare, the government-run health care plan for the elderly, to pay doctors for voluntary counseling sessions that address end-of-life issues. The conversations between doctor and patient would include living wills, making a close relative or a trusted friend your health care proxy, learning about hospice as an option for the terminally

ill, and information about pain medications for people suffering chronic discomfort. The sessions would be covered every five years, more frequently if someone is gravely ill. The American Medical Association and the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization support the provision.

In her posting, Palin wrote: "With all due respect, it's misleading for the president to describe this section as an entirely voluntary provision that simply increases the information offered to Medicare recipients," and added, "It's all just more evidence that the Democratic legislative proposals will lead to health care rationing."

The issue is no longer viable for the six members of the Senate Finance Committee — three Republicans and three Democrats — working on a bipartisan bill, according to Grassley. In a statement, Grassley criticized the House bill, saying there was a difference between a "simple education campaign, as some advocates want," and paying

"physicians to advise patients about end-of-life care."

The provisions remain in the House bill, which would have to be reconciled with whatever bill the Senate eventually produces before President Barack Obama could sign it. He has said health care reform is his top domestic priority. Obama campaigned last year on a promise of offering health care to all Americans. The United States is the only developed country that does not have comprehensive health care plan for all its citizens. Roughly 46 million of America's 300 million people are without health insurance.

Palin's posting came one day after Republican Sen. Lisa Murkowski of Alaska said that Palin and other critics were not helping the Republicans by tossing out false claims. Portions of the Democratic health care bills "are bad enough that we don't need to be making things up," Murkowski said, invoking a phrase that Palin used in her resignation speech, when she asked the news media to "quit making things up."

Murkowski said she was offended at the death panel terminology. "There is no reason to gin up fear in the American public by saying things that are not included in the bill," she said.

Georgia Sen. Johnny Isakson, a Republican who co-sponsored a similar measure in the Senate, said it was "nuts" to claim the bill encourages euthanasia.

And Rep. Earl Blumenauer, a Democrat who authored the provision on end-of-life counseling, said he is astounded that Palin has not tempered her bleak descriptions of the health care bill.

"It's deliberate at this point," Blumenauer said. "If she wasn't deliberately lying at the beginning, she is deliberately allowing a terrible falsehood to be spread with her name." He said the measure would block funds for counseling that presents suicide or assisted suicide as an option, calling references to death panels or euthanasia "mind-numbing." □



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U.S. prison assessed for possible Gitmo transfers

JOHN FLESHER

Associated Press Writer

STANDISH, Michigan (AP) — Federal officials visited a maximum-security prison in rural Michigan on Thursday to assess its suitability to house Guantanamo Bay inmates. Representatives of the Defense, Justice and Homeland Security departments toured the prison in Standish, 145 miles north of Detroit.

The Standish prison and a military penitentiary at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, are being considered to house the detainees if the prison at the

U.S. Navy base in Cuba is closed by 2010, as ordered by President Barack Obama.

The Guantanamo Bay facility houses 229 suspected al-Qaida, Taliban and foreign fighters.

Some local residents favor bringing the detainees to Standish if necessary to keep the prison from closing. The prison is the region's largest employer, with about 340 workers, and its closing would really harm the local economy, Republican state Rep. Tim Moore said. The region's unemployment rate is more

than 17 percent.

Others fear bringing the Guantanamo detainees to Standish would make the town a target.

"The problem I have is, you almost are putting a bullseye on the whole entire area. There are just too many things that could go wrong," said Tom Kerrins, the chief steward for the Michigan Corrections Organization, the union representing prison workers in Standish.

Kerrins, 49, said the union opposes sending the Gitmo prisoners to Standish in part

that other governors have flown in such seats.

He has said the revelation in June of his international affair has opened him to unfair attacks.

In an opinion piece published in state newspapers on Thursday about the state plane use, the governor said his dentist appointment was for a chipped tooth treated on his way to a television news interview, and he questioned why he would have flown to a haircut at a discount salon that does not take appointments.

Records reviewed by the AP show that since Sanford took office in 2003, the two-term Republican has taken trips on state aircraft to locations of his children's sporting events, hair and dentist appointments, political party gatherings and a birthday party for a campaign donor.

The letter from McMaster includes excerpts of state law, including: "Any and all aircraft owned or operated by agencies of the State Government shall be used only for official business."

Misuse of state resources can lead to civil or criminal penalties under the state's ethics laws. Any public official found to have used state property for personal financial gain is subject to as much as a \$5,000 fine and five years in prison. Only incidental use that does not result in additional public expense is exempt.

Last month, the AP revealed how Sanford had flown in pricey seats on commercial airlines at taxpayer expense, despite a law requiring lowest-cost travel. State Sen. David Thomas, a Republican congressional candidate who has been investigating those flights, said this week the more expensive flights on two state Commerce Department trips broke the law — costing taxpayers \$13,700 more than the economy class flights available.

Sanford repeated Thursday

ETHIC PROBE

Continued from Page B1

The letter from Attorney General Henry McMaster to the chief of the state Ethics Commission follows Associated Press investigations into Sanford's use of state aircraft for personal and political trips, and his flights on commercial airlines.

"This is to request the South Carolina Ethics Commission to investigate these allegations involving the use of state planes and any other potential violations of the State Ethics Act," McMaster wrote in a brief letter to Herb Hayden, executive director of the state Ethics Commission, which enforced the state's ethics laws.

The next step would be for the ethics commission's staff to investigate the complaint and determine if there is probable cause for a full hearing.

Sanford has called the AP characterization of some of his flights "misleading" and says they are taken out of context in part because he has used state planes less than his predecessors. He also says he's ridden in the same type of seats as other governors on commercial flights.

"We've really tried to go to extra mile, when it comes to watching out for the taxpayer," the governor said Thursday. "I look forward to the Ethics Commission or anybody looking at the way we used that plane."



In this Aug. 3, 2009 file photo, Paul Piche, a corrections officer at Standish Maximum Correctional Facility, holds placard demanding the recall of Gov. Jennifer Granholm in Standish, Mich. Obama administration officials plan on Thursday, Aug. 13, 2009 to tour the soon-to-be-shuttered Michigan state prison considered an option to hold terrorism suspects now detained at Guantanamo Bay in Cuba.

Associated Press

because it doubts the jobs of watching over them would go to the state officers working there now and would instead go to federal officers.

"They're still going to kick us down the road. They're going to use their own people," the Gladwin resident said Thursday outside the prison. Rep. Peter Hoekstra of Michigan, the senior Republican on the House Intelligence Committee, said Thursday that he would ask the departments of Defense and Justice to lead a delegation

to visit Guantanamo Bay "to better understand the special circumstances and the challenges that these detainees present by moving them to Michigan."

Hoekstra, who is running for Michigan governor in 2010, is opposed to moving the prisoners to the state.

"Allowing state and local officials to see firsthand these detainees and Guantanamo Bay is necessary for them to understand the challenges and risks," he said in a statement.

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U.S. defends plan to use Colombian military bases



Military police walk on Palanquero Air Force base in Puerto Salgar in Colombia's central Magdalena valley, Wednesday, Aug. 12, 2009. The Palanquero base is expected to host U.S. Air Force counter narcotics missions once an agreement is made which would give U.S. forces access to at least five Colombian bases.

Associated Press

IAN JAMES

Associated Press Writer

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP) — U.S. military officials on Thursday defended a proposed agreement to use seven Colombia bases, saying the deal would not change U.S. missions in Colombia nor increase the allowed number of troops.

Negotiations to give the U.S. access to the bases for 10 years are expected to be completed by the end of the month, senior U.S. military official Frank Mora told The Associated Press.

Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez calls the plan a serious threat to the region, and other South American nations from Brazil to Bolivia have also expressed concern.

"It does not envision any larger military presence," said Mora, the deputy assistant secretary of defense for the Western Hemisphere. "It formalizes what we're already doing."

U.S. officials say American troops will continue to be involved in helping Colombia in counter-drug operations and

in supporting its fight against leftist rebels. The U.S. has on average 250 troops in Colombia, a number could increase to 400 because of construction work planned at one of the bases, Mora said in a telephone interview.

But he said the military has no intention of trying to increase the current limit set by the U.S. Congress for personnel in Colombia: 800 American troops and 600 civilian contractors.

"There will be no offensive capacity from these bases whatsoever. There's not going to be F-16s flying in or tanks or anything of the sort," Mora said.

Mora dismissed Chavez's warnings as "typical anti-Yankee rhetoric."

Gen. James Cartwright, vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said the U.S. needs to respond to regional concerns.

"I think we need to do a better job of explaining to them what we're doing and making it as transparent as possible, because anybody's concerns are valid," he said. □



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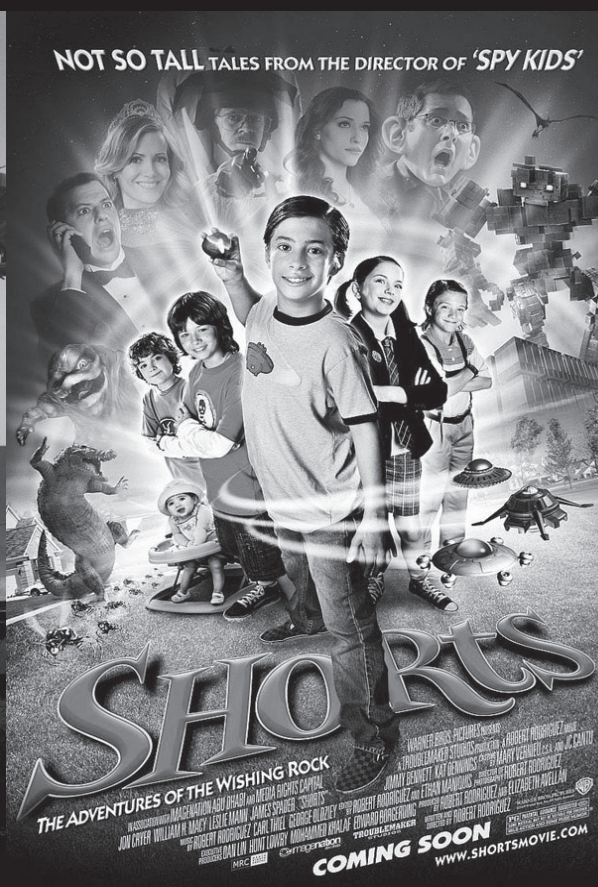
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PG-13 G:I: JOE THE RISE OF THE COBRA	daily: 5:45 matinee: 12:30	8:30 3:15	late show:	11:15	
PG-13 TRANSFORMER 2	daily: 8:00 matinee:		late show:	11:00	
R THE HANGOVER	daily: 7:30 matinee:	10:00	late show:	12:15	
R THE ORPHAN	daily: 6:15 matinee: 12:45	8:45 3:30	late show:	11:30	
PG HARRY POTTER AND THE HALF-BLOOD PRINCE	daily: 4:15 matinee: 1:00		late show:		
PG ICE AGE 3 DAWN OF THE DINOSAURS	daily: 4:00 matinee: 12:00	6:00 2:00	late show:		3D
PG ALIENS IN THE ATTIC	daily: 5:00 matinee: 12:15	7:15 2:45	9:30 late show:	12:00	

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PG-13 DISTRICT 9	daily: 5:30 matinee: 1:00	7:45 3:15	10:15 late show:	12:30	NEW
R FUNNY PEOPLE	daily: 6:00 matinee: 12:00	9:00 3:00	late show:	12:00	
PG-13 THE PROPOSAL	daily: 9:30 matinee:		late show:	12:15	
PG HARRY POTTER AND THE HALF-BLOOD PRINCE	daily: 4:30 matinee: 1:15	8:00	late show:	11:15	
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PG G-FORCE	daily: 5:00 matinee: 12:45	7:15 2:45	late show:		3D
PG-13 JULIE AND JULIA	daily: 4:45 matinee: 2:00		late show:		
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Shoot at the pirates? West weighs arming ships

CHRISTOPHER TORCHIA
Associated Press Writer

ISTANBUL – Challenging a global aversion to guns aboard ships, France has put troops on tuna boats in the Indian Ocean, and Belgium is offering military units to its merchant vessels off the Horn of Africa. Now, U.S. lawmakers are weighing similar action to fight piracy. Opponents fear such moves will escalate the violence and raise a minefield of legal issues.

In June, the U.S. House of Representatives passed an amendment that would require the Department of Defense to put armed teams on U.S.-flagged ships passing through high-risk waters, specifically around the Horn of Africa where Somali pirates have become a scourge of world shipping.

The amendment now goes to the Senate. A separate bill introduced last month would grant immunity from prosecution in American courts to any “owner, operator, time charterer, master, or mariner who uses force, or authorizes the use of force, to defend a vessel of the United States against an act of piracy.”

Both measures face tough debate — U.S. military resources are spread thin and onboard weapons, especially in the hands of civilian crew, are seen as an extreme option.

“Work and watch-keeping take up most of a seafarer’s day,” Sam Dawson of the International Transport Workers’ Federation, which represents hundreds of unions, told The Associated Press by e-mail. “The practice, handling and use of weapons would be a duty too far.”

But there is a strong push for action following the April seizure of the MV Maersk Alabama.

That standoff, which transfixed the American public, ended with the

killing of three pirates by Navy SEAL snipers and the release of the vessel’s captain, Richard Phillips.

The wider potential fallout from the Western initiatives is uncertain because countries such as the Philippines, which supplies most of the world’s ship crews, don’t have the resources to protect them. Besides, the laws of many nations prevent vessels from carrying weapons, historically for fear they would be used by mutineers.

A range of maritime groups and insurers oppose arming ships because of liability issues and fears that violence could provoke an arms race with the pirates. Still, some ship-owners hire private guards; Israeli commercial boats are believed to routinely carry arms.

“What the Americans do will not necessarily lead the way in terms of the global shipping industry,” said Daniel Sekulich, the Toronto-based author of “Terror on the Seas: True Tales of Modern Day Pirates.”

Sekulich said a global trend could take hold if international groups such as the U.N. International Maritime Organization develop a comprehensive approach to arming ships. In the meantime, he said, the U.S. initiatives could encourage a “two-tiered or three-tiered system” in which a few wealthy nations protect ships flying their flags, while pirates prey on softer targets.

International patrols, including U.S., European, Chinese, Russian and Indian ships, have reduced the success rate of Somali attacks. But with ransoms running into millions of dollars, pirates have adapted, raiding boats far into the Indian Ocean.

Advocates say onboard teams with weapons would



This April 13, 2009 file photo released by the U.S. Navy shows a team from the amphibious assault ship USS Boxer towing the lifeboat from the Maersk Alabama to Boxer to be processed for evidence after the successful rescue of Capt. Richard Phillips.

Associated Press

deter or defeat ragtag bands of pirates in flimsy skiffs. On April 25, pirates tried to board the Italian cruise liner MSC Melody as it headed in the Indian Ocean from southern Africa to Europe, but Israeli private guards opened fire and the assailants departed.

For opponents, the worst-case scenario is pirates getting bigger weapons.

“It’s something that could actually stoke up the attacks, take the attacks to a higher level,” said Andrew Linington of London-based Nautilus International, a union that represents 24,000 mariners, most of whom work on British- or Dutch-registered ships.

But internal polling among Nautilus members has indicated a “hardening of attitudes” in recent months, with more calling for armed protection, Linington said.

This summer, the Netherlands turned down a plea from parliament to put marines on especially vulnerable, slow-moving Dutch vessels threatened by Somali pirates. The refusal was based on fear that pirates could react more violently if they spot weapons and that wounded marines would not get medical care at sea. Belgium, however, decided

in early May to offer an onboard detachment of at least eight troops for euro115,000 (\$162,000) a week per unit to its commercial vessels, but so far there has been only one taker, according to Defense Ministry spokesman Kurt Verwilligen.

The French government signed a deal with a tuna fishermen’s union in June allowing for military protection of tuna boats in the Indian Ocean during the fishing season, according to Lt. Col. Phillippe de Cussac, a military spokesman. No attacks have been reported so far.

Global pirate attacks more than doubled in the first half of 2009 to 240, from 114 in the same period last year, according to the International Maritime Bureau. A surge of raids in the Gulf of Aden and off the east coast of Somalia accounted for many attacks, though waters off Nigeria are a serious trouble spot. The Somali attacks are in a lull because seas are rough, but are expected to increase around the end of this month when the weather should improve.

The measure to put military guards on U.S.-flagged ships passed in the House

by a vote of 389-22.

In testimony in May, Arthur J. Volkle Jr., vice president of American Cargo Transport, Inc., said private guards were already on his group’s ships in the Gulf of Aden and the Persian Gulf. He said the best way to protect U.S.-flagged ships was by deploying military teams to avoid “regulatory shortfalls, liability concerns, and international reluctance to permit armed merchant vessels into their ports.”

Phillips, the Maersk Alabama captain, has testified that senior crew members should have access to weapons, though he acknowledged that even this limited approach opens “thorny” issues. Maritime experts say some seafarers travel with small arms, but don’t declare them.

The separate bill granting immunity has yet to go to a House vote. It would direct Washington to negotiate deals through the U.N. maritime agency to provide similar exemptions from liability in other countries, as well as to ensure armed U.S. crews can enter foreign ports. But implementing the measure could be difficult because the U.N. agency discourages onboard weapons. □

TAIWAN

Continued from Page B1

The perilous rescue was part of a massive military effort to save hundreds of stranded villagers after the worst flooding to hit Taiwan in 50 years. Some 14,000 villagers have been rescued since the typhoon struck five days ago; hundreds more are feared missing or dead.

As criticism mounted Thursday over Taiwan's response to the disaster, the government dispatched another 4,000 troops to work with the 14,000 already deployed. Many of them are working in Kaohsiung County, a mountainous farming region in southern Taiwan.

The rugged terrain and widespread devastation played havoc with rescue efforts following the storm, which dumped 80 inches of rain on the island over the weekend. Soldiers in fatigues and heavy gloves resorted to using a makeshift zipline to haul survivors from the village of Sinkai over the Ba Si Lan River where the bridge was wiped out. For hours they labored, rescuing everyone from a young boy in shorts to an elderly woman who brought along a couple of shopping bags worth of belongings.

Unbuckled from their harnesses, villagers looked dazed and frightened as they recalled the harrowing night

of Aug. 8.

"It rained for days," said Li Wen-chuan, a grizzled-looking man of 68 with sparse salt-and-pepper hair, teeth stained red by years of betel nut chewing. "But the flood came so suddenly and with a tremendous roar. It destroyed everything in the village."

"This is the worst thing that has ever happened to me," he said, adding that many of the 32 who died in his village were friends and family. "My life will never be the same."

Pan Yi-chang, a 32-year-old mother of two, said that when the rains spawned by Morakot began to fall, she had no inkling that this typhoon would be any different from others.

The ravaged villages — most of them scattered in neighboring townships in northern Kaohsiung County — are typically located next to mountains, and they usually have to brace for mudslides during Taiwan's annual typhoon season during June to September. But this time was different, residents said.

"Everything happened so fast. Flooding just destroyed everything," said Pan, adding that she was lucky because all of her family survived — her husband, her two children and her mother and father.

As she spoke, Pan gazed longingly across the river toward the only home she



Taiwan military rescue villagers on an emergency cable sling strung across the Ba Si Lan river in Sinfa, Taiwan, Thursday, Aug. 13, 2009, five days after flash flooding from Typhoon Morakot took the lives of 32 fellow villagers. The sign reads 32 dead in their village from Typhoon Morakot's flooding. Hundreds of villagers fled their homes minutes before a flood-created lake burst Thursday, as the Taiwanese military deployed thousands more troops to rescue and deliver supplies to survivors from remote villages devastated during last weekend's typhoon.

has ever known, a close-knit community of 1,000 whose economy is based on growing mangos and guavas.

In the background, a heavy mist enveloped the summit of a nearby mountain and torrents of water cascaded down its dark green facades.

Scores of villages in the rural south of Taiwan were devastated by the typhoon. One of the worst affected is Shiao Lin, where hundreds remain missing after a catastrophic mudslide spawned by days of torrential rain.

Taiwan's official death toll from the storm now stands at 108, with another 62 listed as missing. That does not include the toll in Shiao Lin and other remote communities.

Many of those rescued say they can never return to their villages because there is nothing left to return to.

Li, the grizzled veteran of Sinkai, is not one of them.

"I am going back," he said. "Sinkai is where my roots are. I have no other place to go."

Many complained that the government was too slow

Associated Press

to mobilize the rescue and cleanup effort, saying more victims could have been saved if they had moved sooner and faster. "Why does the government say only useless things?" a woman eager to learn the fate of relatives trapped in Kaochung village in the south asked. With tears filling her eyes, she told TV reporters: "I've been waiting for several days, yet there has not been anyone going to rescue my family." In a short interview with CNN, President Ma Ying-jeou blamed the severe damage brought by the flooding on villagers' inability to get out of their communities before the storm. Authorities in Kaohsiung County did ask inhabitants from the villages most severely battered by Morakot to leave before the storm, but they did not try to forcibly remove the residents, and some villagers decided against leaving.

"They were not fully prepared. If they were, they should have been evacuated much earlier," Ma said. "They didn't realize how serious the disaster was." Ma did not comment on whether the government was doing enough to help with the evacuation.

Troops were working Thursday to restore severed roads, rehabilitate ravaged neighborhood and ferry typhoon victims to safety in dozens of helicopter missions.



Riot police detain a demonstrator protesting in support of the Mapuche Indians near La Moneda government palace in Santiago, Thursday, Aug. 13, 2009.

Associated Press

EVA VERGARA

Associated Press Writer

SANTIAGO, Chile (AP) — Mapuche Indians vowed Thursday to keep seizing land in southern Chile despite the death of an activist who resisted an eviction by riot police.

The rebellion appeared to be growing despite efforts by the Chilean government to help the Mapuche buy land and timber companies to help ease their poverty. Hours after the activist was killed, an agricultural warehouse in the area was set on fire,

Chile's Mapuche Indians seize land, police kill 1

destroying about \$1 million worth of equipment, the interior ministry said.

President Michelle Bachelet said Thursday that the activists are harming their own cause.

"Nothing, absolutely nothing, justifies the violence in La Araucania. They must understand that the only path to a solution to the legitimate historical demands of the Mapuche people is dialogue," she said.

But Jose Santos Millao of the activist group Ad Mapu said the death Wednesday of Fabian Facundo Mendoza Collio, 24, will only inspire them to fight harder for their ancestral lands.

Police said at least eight of the Indians carried rifles, and that an officer fired at Mendoza Collio in self-defense as his body was hit by more than 80 pellets. Eight Indians and three officers were later injured in another confrontation as the Indians tried to recover the body outside the town of Collipulli, about 370 miles south of the capital. Mapuches represent about 6 percent of Chile's 17 million people. They resisted the Spanish conquest for 300 years before the government finally pushed them into communities in southern Chile. Most now live in deep poverty. Patricio Rosende, a top interior ministry official, said the police officer who killed Mendoza was detained pending an investigation.

Double suicide bombing kills more than 20 in Iraq

KIM GAMEL

Associated Press Writer

BAGHDAD (AP) — A double suicide bombing devastated a cafe packed with young people in northwestern Iraq on Thursday, killing at least 21 people, officials said, in the latest attack against a minority community.

The blast capped a deadly week in which nearly 150 people have been killed in bombings concentrated near the volatile northern city of Mosul and Baghdad, heightening fears that Sunni insurgents are stepping up efforts to stoke ethnic and sectarian tensions. Thursday's attack occurred shortly after 5 p.m. in Sinjar, a city dominated by members of the Kurdish-speaking Yazidi religious group that is concentrated near the Syrian border.

It came two years after a village near Sinjar was hit by one of the worst insurgent attacks since the 2003 U.S. invasion. Four suicide truck bombers exploded nearly simultaneously in Qahataniya on Aug. 14, 2007, killing as many as 500 Yazidis.

The bombers detonated their explosives Thursday inside the Ayoub cafe as the popular sunset destination was packed with people drinking tea and

playing dominoes.

City officials imposed a curfew and said some of the most seriously wounded were evacuated to hospitals in the nearby semiautonomous Kurdish region.

"What has happened this afternoon is a catastrophe that hit our city," said municipal council member Meysar Subhi. "Young people were murdered while they were just trying to have a nice time."

The attack killed 21 people, including an Egyptian resident, and wounded 32, said the director of Sinjar hospital, Dr. Kifah Mahmoud.

The top commander of U.S. forces in northern Iraq, Army Maj. Gen. Robert Caslen, said Tuesday that recent attacks show the resilience of al-Qaida in Iraq and other Sunni insurgents despite numerous military operations against them.

Tensions are especially acute along the sensitive fault line of territory disputed by Kurds and Arabs where the Yazidis live. Kurdish checkpoints guard entrances to Sinjar, and the city's mayor, Dakhil Qassim Hassoun, recently called for it to be incorporated into the nearby semiautonomous Kurdish territory.

Several top U.S. defense

officials have identified the split between Iraq's majority Arabs and the Kurdish minority as probably a greater long-term threat to Iraq's stability than the more familiar Sunni-Shiite conflict.

They have warned that conflict between the two groups over land and oil could explode into a new front in the Iraq conflict even as overall levels of violence decline — a dangerous prospect as U.S. forces prepare to withdraw by the end of 2011. Tensions also have been rising ahead of national elections scheduled for January.

The competition between Arabs and Kurds could lead to "an ethnic, lethal-force engagement," Caslen told reporters, but added he was encouraged by political movement on both sides.

Addressing the recent spasm of violence, Caslen said al-Qaida is using the new attacks to draw attention but so far has not been able to provoke a large-scale sectarian retaliation.

Caslen said the number of insurgent attacks has dropped in Mosul since the handover of control of the city to Iraqi forces on June 30. Weekly attacks averaged 42 before the handover. They now average



People inspect a damaged bus after a car bomb explosion in the neighborhood of Shaab in Baghdad, Iraq, Tuesday, Aug 11, 2009. A double truck bombing Monday in Mosul and blasts in Baghdad brought the Iraqi death toll to more than 100 in four days, the worst spasm of violence the country has suffered since U.S. forces left the cities.

Associated Press

29, Caslen said. At the same time, high-profile attacks and attacks on Iraqi security forces are up, producing a higher number of casualties, he said. Bombers in the area surrounding Mosul have mainly targeted ethnic minorities, indicating that insurgents are seeking out vulnerable, relatively unprotected targets to maximize casualties as the strapped Iraqi army focuses its efforts on more central areas.

Bombings struck mainly Shiite communities on the fringes of Mosul last Friday and Monday, targeting a mosque used by Shiite Turkomen and a Shabak community.

Baghdad also has faced a spate of high-profile attacks.

A motorcycle bomb exploded late Thursday near a restaurant in a Shiite enclave in southern Baghdad, killing at least two civilians and wounding 10 others, police said. □

Israel investigating report soldier kidnapped

By GAVIN RABINOWITZ

Associated Press Writer

JERUSALEM — Police set up dozens of roadblocks across central Israel on Thursday as the military said it was investigating a report that one of its soldiers may have been kidnapped.

The alert was sounded after a female soldier reported seeing another soldier being forced into a car outside an army base, the army said. However, it said no further evidence of an abduction has been found.

Later, a little known Palestinian group calling itself Al Quds Army claimed responsibility for kidnapping a soldier in an e-mail sent to the Palestinian news agency, Maan.

In the e-mail, they promised to release details of the soldier later, said Maan.

The army did not say where the alleged incident took place. However, police set up dozens of checkpoints on all roads leading to the West Bank and stopped and searched cars, causing long traffic jams across central Israel.

Israeli media reported that the army had confined soldiers to their bases and were checking for missing soldiers, but none had been found so far.

The massive security operation highlights Israel's fears of having more soldiers kidnapped.

Winning the return of Israeli captives — or even their corpses — is a cardinal tenet of the Israeli military, and lopsided prisoner exchanges have been common in the past. Soldiers are trained never to abandon comrades on the battlefield. The capture of two Israeli soldiers on the Lebanese border by Hezbollah, a Shiite Islamic militia allied to Hamas, was the trigger that set off the 2006 Israeli war in Lebanon. Israel later swapped a notorious Lebanese guerrilla for the remains of the two soldiers, under heavy pressure from the servicemen's families.

Israel already has one soldier being held captive. Sgt. Gilad Schalit was captured by Hamas-allied militants three years ago in a cross-border raid from Gaza. Schalit has not been seen since then, and the Red Cross has not been permitted to visit him.

Egypt has been mediating attempts to trade Schalit for hundreds of Palestinian prisoners held by Israel. But negotiations for Schalit's release have been hobbled by Hamas' demand that among those to be freed are many convicts serving time for deadly attacks on Israelis. □



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This Nov. 6, 2008, file photo shows Cleveland Browns wide receiver Donte' Stallworth running after a pass reception in an NFL football game against the Denver Broncos in Cleveland.

Associated Press

Donte' Stallworth suspended without pay for NFL season

RACHEL COHEN

AP Sports Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Cleveland Browns wide receiver Donte' Stallworth was suspended without pay for this season Thursday after pleading guilty to manslaughter in June.

NFL commissioner Roger Goodell said Stallworth placed a "stain" on the reputation of the league and all its players. Stallworth struck and killed a pedestrian while driving under the influence of alcohol March 14 in Miami. He pleaded guilty to the second-degree felony June 16 and was suspended indefinitely by Goodell two days later.

Stallworth was given a 30-day jail sentence and reached an undisclosed financial settlement with the family of Mario Reyes, a 59-year-old construction worker who was leaving his job as a crane operator. In a letter to Stallworth released by the NFL, Goodell wrote that he didn't take into account the sentence in determining the 28-year-old player violated the league's substances of abuse and personal conduct policies. "Your conduct endangered yourself and others, leading to the death of an innocent man," Goodell wrote. □

Tiger roars again at PGA

NANCY ARMOUR

AP National Writer

CHASKA, Minnesota (AP)

— Tiger Woods shot a bogey-free 5-under 67 to be one stroke ahead of playing partner and defending champ Padraig Harrington atop the leaderboard at the U.S. PGA Championship on Thursday.

"There are times I've put it together and had some pretty good margins of victory," Woods said. "I just feel that, overall, my game over the years has gotten better. It's become more consistent. I usually don't make too many mistakes."

He didn't on this day, breaking 70 in the opening round of a major for the first time since the 2007 British Open. He made birdies on all but one of Hazeltine National's long par 5s and hit 12 of 14 fairways. His only "flaw" was a few missed putts, including ones for birdie on each of his last two holes.

"It's always nice to get off quick, but the first round — you can play yourself out of a tournament but you certainly



Tiger Woods tees off on the fifth hole during the first round of the 91st PGA Championship at the Hazeltine National Golf Club in Chaska, Minn., Thursday, Aug. 13, 2009.

Associated Press

cannot win it on the first day," said Woods, who has four Wanamaker Trophys among his 14 major titles.

"You don't have to be eight ahead after the first round, that's not it."

Continued on Page B12

Vick signs deal with Eagles



ROB MAADDI

AP Sports Writer

PHILADELPHIA (AP)

— Disgraced quarterback Michael Vick was back in the NFL on Thursday, landing a job with the Philadelphia

Eagles.

Vick's agent Joel Segal told The Associated Press it was a two-year deal.

Vick, once the NFL's highest-paid player, has not played since 2006. The former Atlanta Falcons quarterback was convicted in August 2007 of conspiracy and running a dogfighting operation, and served 18 of a 23-month sentence in federal prison. He also was suspended indefinitely by the NFL.

Commissioner Roger Goodell conditionally lifted Vick's suspension on July 27, allowing him to sign with a team, practice and play in the last two preseason games. Once the season

begins, Vick can participate in all team activities except games, and Goodell said he would consider Vick for full reinstatement by Week 6 (Oct. 18-19) at the latest.

The Eagles went to the playoffs last season under quarterback Donovan McNabb, and are still looking for their elusive first Super Bowl win.

The team, though, is a surprise landing point for Vick. It was among 26 clubs that said there was no interest in Vick, but that may have changed when backup Kevin Kolb strained a knee ligament this week. Kolb's injury wasn't serious and he's expected to return next week. The Eagles also have veteran A.J. Feeley. □



Philadelphia Phillies starting pitcher Pedro Martinez delivers during the first inning of a baseball game against the Chicago Cubs, Wednesday, Aug. 12, 2009, at Wrigley Field in Chicago.

Associated Press

NL Roundup

Pedro returns with a win, Phils beat Cubs 12-5

CHICAGO (AP) — Pedro Martinez made a successful return to the majors Wednesday, going five innings in the Philadelphia Phillies' 12-5 victory over the Chicago Cubs. The 37-year-old, three-time Cy Young Award winner got plenty of support as Shane Victorino, Jimmy Rollins and Raul Ibanez homered as the World Series champs sent the Cubs to their fourth straight loss.

Martinez (1-0) allowed seven hits and three runs with a walk and five strikeouts, throwing 99 pitches. His fastest pitch was clocked at 92 mph.

Martinez's 215th career win was his first since last Aug. 31, against Florida while with the New York Mets. He signed with the National League East leaders on July 15.

In other NL games it was, N.Y. Mets 6, Arizona 4; San Francisco 4, L.A. Dodgers 2, 10 innings; Houston 14, Florida 6; Atlanta 6, Washington 2; Philadelphia 12, Chicago Cubs 5; San Diego 6, Milwaukee 5; St. Louis 5, Cincinnati 2; and Colorado 8, Pittsburgh 0. □

AL Roundup

Griffey's pinch hit send M's over White Sox in 14

GREGG BELL

AP Sports Writer

SEATTLE (AP) — Pinch-hitter Ken Griffey Jr. lined a single off the right-field wall with two outs in the bottom of the 14th to give the Mariners a 1-0 victory over the Chicago White Sox on Wednesday night and end the longest scoreless game in Seattle's 33-year history.

After the second seventh-inning stretch of the night, Adrian Beltre, eight days removed from the disabled list following shoulder surgery, singled with one out in the 14th. Tony Pena (6-4) struck out Russell Branyan but walked Jack Hannahan, who was playing because shortstop Jack Wilson strained his hamstring in the fifth inning. Griffey rekindled his Seattle magic of the 1990s by lining a 1-2 pitch into the corner.

Yankees 4, Blue Jays 3, 11 innings

At New York, Robinson Cano hit a game-ending RBI single in the 11th inning for New York to cap a successful homestand with a victory over Toronto.

Alex Rodriguez got the winning rally started when he was hit by a pitch from Shawn Camp (1-6) with one out. Rodriguez moved up on Jorge Posada's single and scored when Cano lined Camp's first pitch into the gap in right-center.

Cano also homered for AL East-leading New York, which wrapped up a 6-1 homestand. Local product Randy Ruiz homered for the second straight day for the Blue Jays.

Red Sox 8, Tigers 2

At Boston, Josh Beckett pitched seven strong innings for his major league-high 14th win, and Mike Lowell and Jason Bay homered as Boston beat Detroit 8-2.

The Red Sox won their third straight and sent AL Central-leading Detroit to its fourth loss in five games. Boston has won seven straight against the

Beckett (14-4) gave up two runs and three hits, including homers by Carlos Guillen and Marcus Thames. He struck out six and walked one, improving to 8-0 at home this season.

Emergency starter Zach Miner (5-3), who also took the loss in relief in Monday's series opener, gave up five runs and seven hits in 4 2-3 innings. Scheduled starter Armando Galarraga was scratched with severe sore throat.

Boston had scored a total of two runs in three games before returning to Fenway Park this week. The Red Sox have hit eight homers in the first three games of the series.

Angels 10, Rays 5

At Anaheim, California, Gary Matthews Jr. and Howie Kendrick hit three-run homers to help Los Angeles finish a three-game sweep of Tampa Bay.

Chone Figgins had three hits and scored the first run

in a five-run seventh for the Angels, who racked up 24 runs in the series against the defending AL champion Rays.

Carlos Pena hit two homers for the Rays, who lost five times on their six-game West Coast trip. Pat Burrell added an eighth-inning shot as Tampa Bay was swept for the third time this season.

Athletics 6, Orioles 3

At Baltimore, Oakland won a third straight series for the first time since April 2008.

Rookie Vin Mazzaro (4-8) allowed three runs, two earned, in 5 1-3 innings to post his second consecutive win after an eight-game skid.

Landon Powell homered and Cliff Pennington and Scott Hairston had three hits apiece for the last-place A's, who took two of three from Baltimore.

Aubrey Huff homered and Nick Markakis had three hits for the Orioles, who lost the



Seattle Mariners' Ken Griffey Jr. raises his arms as he watches the path of his game-winning single against the Chicago White Sox, scoring Adrian Beltre in the 14th inning of a baseball game Wednesday, Aug. 12, 2009, in Seattle. The Mariners won 1-0 in 14 innings.

Associated Press

season series to Oakland 5-1. Rangers 5, Indians 0

At Cleveland, rookie Tommy Hunter gave up six hits and struck out five batters without a walk over a career-high 7 2-3 innings as Texas bounced back from a 5-0 loss to Cleveland on Tuesday with their league-leading eighth shutout.

Josh Hamilton had three hits and drove in two runs for Texas.

Hunter (5-2) shut down a Cleveland offense that hit .304 while averaging 6.4 runs

in winning 12 of its previous 17 games, but was shut out for the fifth time this season.

Hamilton's two-run double off Fausto Carmona (2-7) gave Texas a 2-0 lead in the third. Carmona allowed two runs and five hits over six innings and dropped to 0-4 in four home starts against Texas.

Twins 7, Royals 1

At Minneapolis, Joe Crede hit a three-run homer in his return to the lineup, and Francisco Liriano had his best start in two months for Minnesota. □

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Tiger Woods, left, and Padraig Harrington, of Ireland, chat on the 13th tee box during the first round of the 91st PGA Championship at the Hazeltine National Golf Club in Chaska, Minn., Thursday, Aug. 13, 2009.

Associated Press

PGA

Continued from Page B10

You've got to just keep plugging along."

Harrington, who also won the 2007 and '08 British Opens, actually shared the lead with Woods after three birdies in a five-hole span on their back nine. But he settled for par on long No. 7 after his putt from the fringe rolled about two inches past while Woods two-putted from 30 feet for a birdie.

Robert Allenby, whose second-place finish at Bridgestone last weekend was overshadowed by the duel between Woods and Harrington, was at 3 under with Hunter Mahan, Mathew

Goggin, Alvaro Quiros and David Toms. Vijay Singh joined them after nearly holing his second shot on the 16th. The ball landed above the hole and spun back toward the cup, stopping at the rim and leaving him an easy tap-in for birdie.

Singh, a two-time winner at the U.S. PGA, hasn't made the cut at the year's final major since 2005, when he tied for 10th.

Phil Mickelson, who missed the British Open to tend to wife Amy, who has breast cancer, was having an up-and-down afternoon. He was at 3 over after going bogey-double bogey on Nos. 9 and 10, but got one of the strokes

back with a birdie on 11.

"The first day of a major, it's always good to keep yourself in there. I think I probably did a little bit more than that," Harrington said.

Having an early lead could be key if the weather turns foul. It was hot, humid and breezy on Thursday, but strong winds are expected on Friday. There's a possibility of rain during the weekend.

"Obviously, he's the best in the world so we expect him to win," Allenby said, referring to Woods.

"But you know what? It's three more days to go. And a lot can happen."

Especially in this, one of the wackier years for golf. Kenny Perry had the Masters won, then lost it. The U.S. Open did its best imitation of a water park the first two days. Ol'

Tom Watson nearly turned back the clock at the British Open.

Not even Woods has been immune.

The world's No. 1 player has won at least one major in each of the last four years, but he's running out of time this year to keep that streak going. He made a charge Sunday at the Masters, but couldn't hang on. He wasn't much of a factor at the U.S. Open, catching a bad break when his side of the draw was deluged. Then he missed the cut at the British.

Woods, however, won the last two weekends at the Buick Open and Bridgestone and now clearly looks to be back on his game.

"I had that nice rest there after the British Open, those two days," he said, drawing laughter.

Much has been made of the supersized Hazeltine, at 7,674 yards the longest course in major championship history. That's 300 yards longer than it was the last time the U.S. PGA was here, just seven years ago. Most of the new length comes on the par 5s — three are 600 yards or longer. The thinking is that No. 7, at "only" 572 yards, will be the lone par 5 that players can still reach in two.

For Woods, though, the holes may as well have bull's-eyes on them. On 15 — at 642 yards, the longest hole on the course — he actually knocked his second shot over the green and into a bunker.

He also had a birdie on 12, a 518-yard par 4.

"It's long on the scorecard, but we didn't play it that long," Woods said. □

Both Williams sisters upset in Cincinnati



JOE KAY

AP Sports Writer

MASON, Ohio (AP) — The Williams sisters have seldom spent such a miserable day together as made third-round exits at the Western & Southern Financial Group Open on Thursday.

Venus Williams botched routine shots all the way through a 7-6 (2), 6-4 loss to Italy's Flavia Pennetta. Williams made 38 unforced errors, repeatedly dumping balls into the net or well beyond the baseline.

"I saw her after the match, and she just said she had made a lot of errors," younger sister Serena said. "I was like, 'Wow.' I didn't think I would do the same thing."

Not the same. Worse. Playing on the same court a few hours later, Serena topped her sister in confounding mistakes. She had 44 unforced errors during a 7-5, 6-4 loss to Austria's Sybille Bammer, who reached the quarterfinals for only the third time this year.

"I never played worse in my life," Serena said. "It was really a bad match."

With the Williams sisters gone, the Open became a stage for Kim Clijsters' comeback. She returned from a two-year layoff to recharge and start a family, and won her first two matches rather easily. Clijsters persevered through a tough test on Thursday to reach the quarterfinals.

She showed focus and energy in a 6-4, 4-6, 6-2 win over French Open champion Svetlana Kuznetsova during the midday heat. The 26-year-old Clijsters swept all four points in the final game, then pumped her fist in celebration.

"My mindset was really good," she said. "I feel really good after this match. It's not that I feel tired or drained or anything, just a few little aches and pains from getting back into playing matches."

The former No. 1 had to find another way to win points when her serve deserted her early in the match. She made

only 39 percent of her first serves in the opening set, but managed to win anyway.

"There are patches where my level is really good, then I have a few dips," she said.

It was the best measure yet of her conditioning. There was full sun and temperatures in the 80s F (high 20s C) during the match, which lasted an hour and 59 minutes. Kuznetsova asked for a break after the second set because she was so hot.

"The conditions today, they were extremely hot," Kuznetsova said. "So it was not really easy to play your game."

The Williams sisters didn't blame the heat. Instead, they blamed themselves for their rare double-loss day.

It was the first time since May at Madrid that neither of the sisters reached a quarterfinal. Serena lost in the first round of that tournament, Venus in the second round.

Third-seeded Venus made some of her worst shots at the biggest moments on Thursday. She hit a couple of forehands long during the first-set tiebreaker, and ended the match by sending a forehand well beyond the baseline.

"I wasn't able to get control of my ball today," she said. "After a while, it was obvious to see she was just keeping the ball in play and waiting for me to self-destruct." □

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Venezuela aprobaría ley educación pese a críticas

CARACAS (Reuters) - La oficialista Asamblea Nacional de Venezuela se apresta a aprobar una polémica ley de educación pese a acusaciones de que aumenta el control del Gobierno sobre escuelas y universidades, en momentos en que el presidente Hugo Chávez acelera su "revolución socialista".

Adversarios y partidarios de la ley realizaron sendas marchas en Caracas para expresar su posición sobre el proyecto, que legisladores han dicho será sancionado el jueves o viernes.

Decenas de opositores que marcharon hacia la Asamblea Nacional para rechazar la ley y solicitar que se difiriera su discusión fueron repelidos con gases lacrimógenos y autos lanzaagua cuando intentaron romper un cordón policial que los separaba de manifestantes oficialistas.

Del lado contrario, con



Partidarios del presidente de Venezuela, Hugo Chávez, durante una manifestación a las afueras de la Asamblea Nacional en Caracas, 13 ago 2009. Partidarios del presidente de Venezuela, Hugo Chávez, durante una manifestación a las afueras de la Asamblea Nacional en Caracas, 13 ago 2009
REUTERS/Jorge Silva

pocos metros de separación, cientos de personas manifestaron en apoyo a la propuesta. El Ministro de Educación, Héctor Navarro, insiste en que urge aprobarlo antes del regreso

a clases en septiembre. "La ley es necesaria por muchas razones (...) que tienen que ver con lo curricular, el funcionamiento de las escuelas, la incorporación de las comunidades, la ampliación del concepto

de comunidad educativa, la mejor definición de la democracia y la autonomía universitaria", aseguró Navarro el miércoles. Opositores, organizaciones no gubernamentales y la jerarquía de la Iglesia Católica denuncian como

ilegal que el instrumento es "radicalmente distinto" al sometido a primera discusión hace ocho años y que Chávez rechazó por considerarlo contrario a su proyecto político.

"El Gobierno pretende que la escuela sea (...) un centro para todos los problemas comunitarios y quiere introducir, sustituyendo a las comunidades educativas, a los consejos comunales que son, en la mayor parte de los casos, apéndices del partido de Gobierno", dijo a Reuters Leonardo Carvajal de la asociación civil Asamblea de Educación.

Una docena de periodistas de La Cadena Capriles - entre cuyas publicaciones se encuentra el popular diario Ultimas Noticias- fueron agredidos por personas no identificadas mientras repartían volantes en rechazo a la ley en las cercanías de la Asamblea Nacional. Algunos tuvieron heridas leves en la cabeza □

Moneda peruana seguirá fuerte

LIMA (Reuters) - La moneda peruana, el sol, continuaría fortaleciéndose en los próximos meses frente al dólar si persisten las señales de que la crisis global habría llegado a su fin y si con ello aumenta el optimismo sobre una pronta recuperación de la economía local.

En lo que va del año, el sol ha subido un 6,57 por ciento a 2,930 unidades por dólar, debido al desempeño positivo del mercado exterior y a algunos datos de Estados Unidos, que alientan una posible salida de la recesión económica mundial.

"Hay la percepción que a corto plazo la economía se está acelerando y por tanto hay más apetito de riesgo, que es un factor importante en las monedas de Latinoamérica, incluyendo el sol", dijo a Reuters el analista de The Royal Bank of Scotland, Benito Berber.

En su último reporte, la Reserva Federal de Estados Unidos se refirió a una posible recuperación de la economía y dijo que mantendrá las tasas de interés cerca del cero por ciento por un tiempo más, lo cual restaría atractivo al dólar, pero tendría el efecto contrario con las monedas emergentes y los metales. El oro al contado cotizó el miércoles a 948,35 dólares la onza al cierre del mercado estadounidense, frente a los 944,55 dólares la onza del cierre del martes en Nueva York. El valor del metal precioso esta ligado al comportamiento de la divisa estadounidense, que como moneda de refugio tiende a bajar cuando los inversionistas apuestan por activos de riesgo como materias primas y divisas.

Venezuela ayuda a Antigua tras escándalo por fraude de Stanford

MIAMI (Reuters) - El pequeño estado caribeño de Antigua y Barbuda, que aún sufre las consecuencias del escándalo por fraude que rodeó al millonario Allen Stanford, encontró el jueves un nuevo benefactor en el presidente venezolano, Hugo Chávez.

El primer ministro Baldwin Spencer informó a la nación que el líder venezolano entregará 50 millones de dólares en asistencia financiera urgente al estado, que se vio fuertemente afectado por el colapso de la firma financiera Stanford a comienzos de año.

"Hoy, me siento complacido de notificar a la nación que a la 1 de esta mañana el presidente Hugo Chávez firmó los papeles necesarios para aprobar la inmediata transferencia del monto total de 50 millones de dólares", dijo Spencer en su discurso.

Los fondos serían usados para ayudar a Antigua y Barbuda a enfrentar los efectos de la crisis financiera global.

Spencer, que llevó a su país a incorporarse al ALBA hace apenas dos meses, aseguró que la ayuda de emergencia de Venezuela vino "absolutamente sin condiciones previas",

pero no dio detalles acerca de los términos. El ministro de Finanzas Harold Lovell dijo en un comunicado que la ayuda venezolana involucraría "algunos subsidios y un crédito en términos muy favorables", aunque agregó que las condiciones estaban siendo finalizadas.

Stanford, alguna vez el mayor inversor de Antigua y Barbuda, ahora enfrenta cargos civiles y criminales relativos a un supuesto fraude por 7.000 millones de dólares que los fiscales dicen se centró en certificados de depósitos emitidos por el Stanford International Bank, de su propiedad, en Antigua.

Entre quienes sufrieron pérdidas hubo también inversores venezolanos.

Fiscales estadounidenses acusan al ex regulador financiero jefe de Antigua, Leroy King, de haber instigado el fraude.

Inversores de Estados Unidos, México, Colombia y Perú demandaron al país por hasta 24.000 millones de dólares en daños, alegando que King fue "cómplice" de Stanford, lo que es negado por el Gobierno del estado caribeño. □

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